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THE INSANE WORLD.



*Tous les hommes sont foux, et malgré leur soins,
Ne different entr'eux, que du plus ou du moins.*

BOILEAU.

All men are mad: and, spite of all finesse,
The madness differs but in more or less.



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THE INSANE WORLD.

GOOD READER,

BEFORE we travel together through the following work, it is desirable that we form some acquaintance; at least, I will give you my narrative, and it shall rest with you, whether or not to take me for a companion.

Once I was a family man, and surrounded with domestic comforts. For more than twenty years I had the strange felicity to love and be beloved; and such was the mutual attraction between me and my conjugal companion, that twice only during that period were we separated for four and twenty hours together. But I have lost my idol; and the children which were the fruit of our affection, are scattered to seek their fortunes—"the world before them," and

the hand of "Providence," I trust, to be their "Guide." As for *me*, to my be-dimmed eyes every surrounding object appears discoloured or distorted, while it brings to my recollection the dear woman who used to participate, and thereby to heighten, my enjoyments. Even the charms of Spring, with which I used to be enraptured, can delight no more:—the trees bud, and the flowers bloom—the birds sing, and the doves coo—to *me*, alas! in vain.

Thus solitary and forlorn, I lately came to London, partly to divert my melancholy, and partly to enquire after a relation, who, from a similar bereavement some time since, became deranged, and had been admitted a patient at St. Luke's Hospital.

I put up at a respectable inn in the city, to which I had been directed. My first object was to visit the relative just mentioned, and my affliction was not a little deepened by the interview. Ah! what sight is so depressing as the ruins of a human mind: the understanding decayed—the memory destroyed—the affection shat-

tered—and the fragments only of reason remaining, to shew how great has been the desolation !

The bitterest cup of human misery, however, is not without alleviation ; and while I lamented over the melancholy fate of my distressed kinsman, I could not forbear a grateful aspiration to HIM who, amidst all my trouble, had preserved to me the use of my mental faculties.

In the evening I repaired to my quarters, and mingled in a small, but agreeable circle of fellow travellers, and respectable neighbours. The pensive solemnity of my appearance excited curiosity, and I was too full of the painful adventure of the day not to gratify it.

The conversation turned, of course, on the distressing nature of intellectual derangement ; and nothing appeared on any countenance present but sympathy and compassion, until one of the company related an anecdote, which, though it may not be new, must be repeated, as forming a kind of text to the following work. “ A few

years since," said the relator, "a gentleman visited Bedlam, and after passing through several wards, fell into conversation with one of the patients, who talked so reasonably, that he was much surprised, and could not forbear asking, "How is it, Sir, that I find here a person so perfectly rational and intelligent?"—"O, Sir," replied the patient, "I will explain that—the world are all gone mad; and finding us few the only people in their senses, have shut us up here together."

Dejected as my mind was, I could not now forbear a momentary smile, in common with the rest of the company—except a grave elderly gentleman at my right hand, who seriously affirmed that this expression, though the sudden ebullition of an insane mind, contained, in a certain sense, a most solemn and momentous truth. "Mad! Sir?" said one of the company, "Surely you must be beside yourself to bring against mankind so extravagant a charge."

"Sir," replied the old gentleman, (whose name I afterwards found to be GREY)—

“ Sir, I beg not to be misunderstood : I do not charge the world with that kind of derangement which incapacitates them for the management of their temporal affairs, much less that defect of intellect which excuses them from moral guilt : but I mean an inconsistency of principles and conduct which cannot be reconciled to the dictates of common sense, to their certain duty, or to their best interests.”

“ And in this sweeping charge,” said another, “ do you mean to involve *all* mankind ?”—“ Where particular exceptions occur (replied Mr. Grey) I shall be happy to admit them ; yet I shall still maintain that, in such instances, the judgment has been rectified, and the conduct regulated by principles in perfect harmony with my general position, that *all mankind are mad*. But I appeal to facts, and engage to prove it to the satisfaction of any gentleman who will devote three or four days to accompany me in a hasty survey of this great metropolis, wherein truly may be seen an epitomé of all the wisdom and learning—of all the riches

and pleasures—of all the madness and folly of the world.”

Struck by so bold a challenge, and from a man of such apparent respectability, several of the company seemed at first disposed to take up the gauntlet. Upon further consideration, however, one found it would interfere with his business—another recollected it would interrupt his pleasures—and a third thought it a matter of no great consequence to him, and not worth the trouble it would cost. Upon this I offered myself to the enquiry, having little business to occupy my attention, and glad of the opportunity to divert my thoughts into a new channel. I engaged to wait on Mr. Grey the following morning, and the rest of the company agreed to meet us in the evening, and hear the progress of our enquiry.

I retired to my chamber, and though my mind was much agitated by the occurrences of the day past, and the engagements of the morrow, my body was also wearied with the fatigue of travelling, which happily counterbalanced the perturbation of my mind,

and procured me a good night's rest. In the morning I awoke, full of my new engagement, and when I had dressed myself, found Mr. Grey in the breakfast-room, ready to receive me. After taking coffee together, we set out at the appointed hour, which was nine o'clock, to make our experiments upon mankind.

Here I hope the reader will indulge me in making a reflection upon the importance of punctuality in our engagements. A punctual man holds himself disengaged to receive his friend, and is not able to enter into other business, because he expects immediately to be called from it; on the other hand, if the visitor be the punctual man, he leaves, perhaps, matters of importance to keep his engagement, and has often the mortification to wait half an hour, or more, unoccupied, before the other is ready to receive him. Either way *time*, the precious material of which life is made, is irrecoverably lost; and frequently through listlessness and want of thought—"I did not think it had been so late!"

FIRST DAY.

ON leaving our inn, we repaired, first, to the BANK, both because my conductor had some business to transact, and because he thought this a proper scene for the commencement of our enquiries.

We were soon immersed in a crowd, and the care and solicitude expressed in every countenance seemed to say, that here was the centre of all their hopes and wishes. The clerks only appeared to be inhabitants of another world, and totally indifferent to the wealth they were dispensing. As we came out, my friend whispered, "What do you think of these people?"—"Truly (said I) they seem to be as intent upon their money transactions, as if their salvation depended on them."—"A great deal more so," rejoined Mr. G.; "and yet these men

know not that they shall live through the day. Is this rational?—But follow me.”

The next place to which my guide conducted me was the STOCK EXCHANGE, where the noise terrified me, though I heard nothing distinctly but *scrip*, *consols*, and *omnium*. “Did you hear any thing like this at St. Luke’s?” said Mr. G.—“No, indeed; but I once heard something similar on a race-ground.”—“Mad people resemble each other,” was his reply; adding, “these are called bulls and bears”—“and very properly (I remarked), for they roar and growl most terribly, and ought, I think, to be muzzled or confined. But I hope, Sir, I am not to consider these as a specimen of mankind in general, any more than the wild beasts at Exeter Change are a sample of the whole animal creation. Oxen, sheep, and domestic animals in general, are not exhibited, because they are so common, and come under daily observation: but I suppose you mean to shew me these as a specimen of human nature in its wildest state, uncivilized and untamed.”

Mr. G. smiled, and led me on to that great emporium of commerce, the ROYAL EXCHANGE. "Here," said my guide, as he introduced me—"Here all nations upon earth occasionally meet, and more languages are spoken than at the tower of Babel, after the confusion; nor are the schemes here agitated, in many instances, less chimerical than that of those celebrated builders, though, I apprehend, very few of these people ever think of building heavenward."

As a shower happened to fall at this juncture, we loitered round the piazzas, remarking the effigies of our kings, and reading some of the papers hung against the walls.

While thus engaged, our attention was particularly attracted by two aged gentlemen—a Jew broker, and a Quaker merchant. The latter appeared bending beneath the weight of nearly four-score years, and the silvery hairs which adorned the head of the former plainly indicated that he was not much his junior. They appeared to be making what is called a *hard* bargain,

or, in other words, trying to outwit each other. The Israelite took great pains to convince his companion that it was for his interest to purchase, and pretended to make some sacrifices in his favour: his article was of the best kind—the market was on the rise, and he had other offers. On the other hand, his wary *friend* affected perfect indifference: he did not want the commodity—it was not altogether what he could wish—and money was very scarce.

The rain subsiding, we left the old gentlemen to complete their bargain, while we crossed over to a neighbouring coffee-house for some refreshment. Our attention was now drawn to a couple of officers, who had before them a map of the seat of war upon the Continent. The one (as we learned from his conversation) was a captain in the militia, who had never seen the face of an enemy; and the other a lieutenant in the navy, who had just set his foot on shore after seven years service. The former was inveighing against one of our commanders on the Continent, and lamenting, with the

vanity of genuine ignorance, that he was not a general officer and in that service ; or “ that *rascal* Bonaparte,” said he, with an oath, “ should not have gained such an advantage.”—“ This gentleman (said I) forgets the reproof of Alexander to the soldier that abused Darius—I don’t pay you, friend, to abuse the enemy, but to fight him.”—“ Most likely he never read it,” said Mr. G.; “ but it is much easier work to talk than to fight, and this gentleman’s talent seems to lie in talking.” The naval officer not pretending to skill in military tactics, the subject took another turn, and he entered as warmly into the state of domestic politics, and drew the characters of the court and city parties as decidedly as if he had spent his life among them. The captain, however, happening to be of a different opinion, the dispute soon became noisy and vehement. “ Why do these men dispute so warmly,” said I softly, “ on subjects which they cannot possibly understand ?”—“ Men are always obstinate,” said Mr. Grey, “ in proportion to their ignorance. The captain

reasons as if able generals could always command success; whereas HE who rules on high often laughs at their best concerted plans. A thunder-storm blown full in the face of a battalion has sometimes turned the fate of a battle, while the rain which fell with it has swollen a rivulet into a torrent, and prevented a retreat.”—“ Providence must never be excluded,” added he, “ though Heaven always acts by second causes.—A good contract from Government, or the marriage of his daughter to a peer, has often changed a noisy city patriot into a courtier, or a disappointment in such a case produced a contrary effect. To understand the history of parties, you must know the individuals, their character, and connections; for no man, in these times, can be expected to serve either his king or country, unless his friends, as well as himself, are properly provided for.”

Another set of company were conversing on the delicacies of a city feast. The fineness of the turtle, and the goodness of the wines, were prominent topics of encomium;

and seemed to constitute the highest felicity of these worthy citizens.

Soon weary of this idle chit-chat, our attention was next excited by two well-dressed men, who appeared to be pretty intimate, and, after a glass or two of wine, began to be very loquacious, and to rally each other on their respective professions; by this circumstance we soon discovered that one of them was an apothecary, and the other an attorney.

“Well, Doctor (said the latter), how many patients have you visited to-day?”

“Eighteen,” replied the former, after pausing a few moments to inspect his memorandum-book.

ATTORNEY. Eighteen! Well, I hope you prescribed plenty of physic!

APOTHECARY. Certainly; or how should I be paid for my attendance?

ATTORNEY. Variety of complaints, Doctor!—plenty of nervous, debilitated, hypochondriac patients?—I wonder what the faculty did before those disorders were invented!

APOTHECARY. I don't know, indeed ; but I know we could not do without them. A lady sent for me to-day, in much alarm. She eats heartily, but fears her appetite is unnatural ; and she sleeps soundly, but is not satisfied, because she does not dream.

ATTORNEY. But you can soon cure those complaints, Doctor.

APOTHECARY. Yes, indeed ; but it will not do to be too quick. Sudden cures always create suspicion of relapse. I have put her under a course of medicine, which—

ATTORNEY. Which will soon moderate her appetite, and make her dream.—But have you no gouty cases ?

APOTHECARY. Yes, several. Two patients I have nursed into regular fits, which will last some time ; and two others bid fair for them.

ATTORNEY. Good, indeed, Doctor ! and so you fleece your patients !

APOTHECARY. No abuse, Mr. Latitat—How many dockets have you struck this term ?

ATTORNEY. Only two, and three executions.

APOTHECARY. And how can you find in your heart to use these instruments of torture ?

ATTORNEY. O dear, Doctor ! a docket is only an emetic, which brings back ill digested property ; and an execution a strong cathartic, to carry off redundancies.

APOTHECARY. But you strip people of their all, and reduce them to perfect beggary.

ATTORNEY. No, indeed : who flourish so well as people who have been Gazetted ?— But what is all this to cutting off a limb ?

APOTHECARY. When we amputate a limb, we do it to save a life : are we not then useful members of society ?

ATTORNEY. So are we. We protect your property while living, and dispose of it when you come to die.

APOTHECARY. Yes ; if any should be left on hand after your bills are paid ; and then you work in a decent bit of a legacy for yourselves.

ATTORNEY. And a compliment for you, Doctor—Aha! Doctor—all fair play!—and then you give them a composing pill.

APOTHECARY. *O scandalum magnatum!* Well, I wonder how many people can be so mad as to go to law!

ATTORNEY. Never mind, Doctor; if they are mad, that will bring them under your care, and you know what to do with mad folks.

APOTHECARY. Yes: but if you get them in hand first, I fear you will not leave enough to pay our fees.

ATTORNEY. Then you can practice gratis, Doctor—*pro bono publico*.

APOTHECARY. Yes; and then you would think us mad instead of our patients; and some honest attorney might sue out a statute of lunacy.

ATTORNEY. Well, Doctor (in an undertone), it is of no use exposing and bemoaning each other. I believe if the world were in their right senses, both of us would have less to do. However, these gentlemen

(alluding to us) will think us mad if we proceed.—Let us call another cause.

Upon this, finding ourselves noticed, and fearing lest we should be taken for spies, we rang for the waiter, and leaving the house, bent our way homeward to the inn.

The writing of two or three letters, and some other private business, occupied the early part of the evening; after which one and another dropped in, till we had pretty nearly the same company as on the preceding evening.

“Well!” said a pert young barrister, who was of the party—“Well, Sir, are you become a convert to Mr. Grey’s hypothesis, that all mankind are mad? Do you think they are so insane as he pretends?”—“Let him hear the evidence,” said Mr. Grey, “and form his own judgment. Relate some of your adventures.”

“Our first visit (said I) was to the Bank, where I found a certain anxiety in their looks, and an eagerness in their manner, which appeared to me not unlike symptoms of insanity; but when I came to the Stock

Exchange, I found them raving, and was glad to make a precipitate retreat.

“ We next visited the Royal Exchange, and there we remarked two old gentlemen, a Jew and a Quaker, both tottering on the brink of the grave, impressed with the same marks of anxiety we had before observed, but more deeply. They were making a hard bargain for some merchandize, the fruits of which neither was likely to enjoy ; for one appeared to be asthmatic, the other gouty, and both on the wrong side of seventy.”

“ But how do you prove these people insane ?” said Mr. SMART (the young lawyer who had started the question)—“ They were only intent upon their business ; and this, I hope is no proof of madness, or else the idle and profligate are the only sensible men with you.”

Here, I confess, my natural timidity prevailed, and I was so much abashed at the strong tone and confident manner of my antagonist, that I wished to resign the cause into abler hands ; and looking toward

Mr. Grey, he immediately took up the argument.

“Whenever,” said Mr. G. “we find the mind so engrossed with one object as to neglect all others, particularly if that object be comparatively of but small importance, and especially when the pursuit of it is evidently injurious rather than beneficial, we have surely reason to question the soundness of that person’s intellectual faculties. Suppose, for instance, a man were engaged to go a long voyage, and not to know how soon the vessel might sail—suppose such a person, instead of preparing for his voyage, were to loiter on the sea shore, and pick up pebbles to fill his pockets, should we not judge the man insane?”—“Certainly,” said one of the company. “Well then,” added Mr. Grey, “these people are travelling to an eternal world as fast as time can carry them; but instead of preparing for their journey, though they are certain they must go, perhaps shortly and without warning, and never to return; yet they are loading themselves with incum-

brances, which must necessarily impede their journey, and unfit them for it. This applies particularly to the two old gentlemen, the Jew and the Quaker, who were evidently trying to take advantage of each other on the brink of another world.

“It is dangerous, then,” said Mr. Smart, “to make a good bargain, lest it should be brought in proof that we are *non compos mentis*.”—“You mistake the argument,” said my friend, “which is not founded on the single circumstance of making a hard bargain, though that is to me a suspicious circumstance—for a hard bargain betrays a hard heart; but on the evidence afforded thereby, that their minds were wholly intent on the present world, in the moment when they should prepare to leave it. For though the young *may* die, we know the aged *must*; and these men no doubt understand the doctrine of annuities, that the probability of dying increases in proportion as our years advance; and yet none suppose Death to be farther off than those to whom he is the nearest.”

“ Ah ! Sir,” said one of our friends present, “ you remind me of my poor neighbour Thrift, who died the other day after a very short illness. When he first apprehended the danger of his situation, he called his family about him, and told them—“ I have settled my affairs—I have made my will—I have provided for my wife and children—but the Lord have mercy on my soul ! I have had no time to think of that.” Nor had he now time ; for a *delirium* seized him, and he was unable to converse ; only at intervals he would exclaim—“ The Lord have mercy on my soul !”

I confess I was much affected with this incident, and was putting the question silently to my own heart, “ Am I prepared to die ?” when another of the company twitched me by the elbow, and whispered, “ You must not regard him, Sir, he is a Methodist—Go on with your story.”

I now related an outline of the dialogue between the Apothecary and the Lawyer, and one of our company, whom I soon found to be a young surgeon, was not a little

pleased to hear the former ran down. Apothecaries he thought a useless class of men, knowing little of medicine but what they pick up from the prescriptions of physicians, and their occasional intercourse with surgeons. As to compounding medicines, which seemed their original department, they were wholly superseded by chemists and druggists, who had more judgment, and used better materials than those ignorant pretenders.

Mr. Grey felt hurt at this illiberal language and indiscriminate censure. It is true, he confessed, there are fools in all professions ; but, generally speaking, apothecaries were well educated men, and united the study of surgery with medicine. He did not, indeed, approve of the usual method of charging in proportion to the quantity of medicine sent, as it often occasions the patient to be gorged therewith, when he would be far better without it. On the other hand, the fees of physicians were so indiscriminately high, that none but persons of some property could consult them, except

when they were able to procure their advice gratis. Modern apothecaries, he said, were for the most part men of science and observation ; and some of them had an extent of practice in the course of twenty or thirty years, to which few physicians could pretend—" much less the boys," said he, looking rather scornfully at the young surgeon, " who, having taken up their degrees before they began to practice, must try a thousand experiments ere they can gain a sufficient practical knowledge for their profession ; and are far more deserving the name of *quacks* than many of our apothecaries.

The conversation now turned on quacks and quackery, and the ignorance and temerity of these nostrum-mongers was severely censured, till the young lawyer, whose natural element seemed to be contradiction, undertook to become their advocate.

" Gentlemen," said he, " the word *quack* is an ill-defined term, applied to men whose education has been irregular, but who often possess a portion of genius which abundantly compensates that defect ; and when

to this they add reading and reflection, they command a degree of respect, and frequently succeed, by a bold prescription, where the regular practitioner has failed. While the man of science has stood trembling and hesitating till his patient has got beyond the reach of medicine, the despised empiric, confident in his own powers, has snatched the dying man from the borders of the grave: and in such a circumstance has founded a fame, and perhaps a fortune, to which regular men have looked rather with envy than contempt."

Here the young doctor burst into a violent philippic against quackery, giving, at the same time, an account of the dangerous tendency of some nostrums, which are advertised as specifics, even in disorders in their very nature fatal.

Mr. Grey again interposed as moderator, and, wishing to draw the conversation into another channel, offered some observations, to bring the present controversy to a close. "Here," said he, "I think we must make some distinction, both as applies to empirics

and to their nostrums. I doubt not but the generality of quacks are extremely ignorant, and prey upon the credulity of their admirers. Yet even among these we find, now and then, men of real talent, who by diligence in study repair their want of education; and by confining their attention to a particular disorder during a long course of experience, they may succeed in cases where able physicians fail. This success not only establishes the character of the individual, but removes the reproach attached to his irregularity; and so, at length, the man who takes up a profession of which he was wholly ignorant, may, in process of time, become an ornament to that profession. Upon the whole, however, I am no friend to quacks or quackery. The instances to which I have alluded are very rare; the generality of these pretenders end as ignorant as they began; and though they may amuse the vulgar with tales of the marvellous, they are generally impostors, and do far more harm than good. One great evil attending quack medicines is, that they are

recommended for too many complaints, and often for such as proceed from causes widely different. Another evil is, that the administration of them is left to the patients themselves. A quack doctor having found, or perhaps bought, a nostrum for a particular disorder, is seldom satisfied with recommending it for that alone, but adds several others, in order to extend its sale. On the other hand, the patient, left to form his own judgment, fancies he perceives in himself the symptoms of various, and perhaps inconsistent complaints. Thus many tamper with their constitutions, and those of their families, and often create, instead of removing, maladies. Not only so, but even where the disorder is rightly guessed, and the medicine really salutary, by administering improper doses, without regard to circumstances, they do harm, where prudence and experience might, even by the same means, effect a cure.

“ This, however (added Mr. G.) is wandering from my subject, and foreign to my design. It is rather with the maladies of

the soul than of the body that I have to do. But I must insist upon it, that the great anxiety which mankind discover about their health and their property, while they shew the utmost indifference with respect to their souls and their spiritual concerns, affords an unhappy proof that their minds are not rightly constituted, or rather, that they are morally deranged. The little affairs of the present life engross all their attention and all their affections, while the infinitely important concerns of a future and eternal state are neglected and contemned. Thus the maniac clothes himself with rags and straws, and, thinking he is royally arrayed, paces the narrow confines of his cell, perfectly regardless of all the fair creation without its walls."

The above temperate remarks on quacks and apothecaries seemed to meet the approbation of the company, and the serious reflection which followed induced a general silence. Some appeared rather disposed to thoughtfulness than for conversation; and others dropt the subject, probably not wish-

ing to provoke any farther observations of the same tendency. It is one of the sad effects of moral insanity, that the patients cannot bear to receive even a hint of their situation. Though they cannot justify their conduct on any principles of reason, they will not allow themselves to suspect it is irrational. "Are we mad also?" they will cry, and turn upon their heel to follow the calls of business or of pleasure, that they may have no time to think.

SECOND DAY.

At eight in the morning I again waited on Mr. Grey, and after breakfasting, we sat out upon a second expedition of enquiry.

As we were proceeding westward, my guide recollected that it was the time of the Westminster Election, and wishing to shew me something of the madness of the political world, we bent our steps toward Covent Garden, which was already thronged with people. On approaching the hustings, we found one of the candidates speaking with a most vehement eloquence, and he was heard with great applause. His friend also, who followed, was received with attention, though his voice was feeble; but the next speaker was saluted with almost

universal groans and hisses ; insomuch, that had he possessed the lungs of a Stentor, he could not possibly have been heard. "How do they know," said I, "whether the gentleman be right or wrong, if they will not hear him."—"That is no matter," said my guide ; "he is of the unpopular party, and must not be heard."—"But these men profess to love Liberty?"—"So they do, to that degree that they wish to engross her to themselves, and are extremely jealous lest others should enjoy her."

Among the most noisy and turbulent, I observed a number of fellows, with clubs in their hands, and cockades in their hats, continually vociferating the name of their favourite candidate, and connecting with it either the King and Constitution on the one hand, or Liberty and Reform on the other. "What are these men?" said I, in a whisper, to my companion.—"They are hired," replied he, satirically, "to preserve the peace, and maintain the freedom of election."—"To clear the way, I suppose, to the hustings, and to see that every elector

has free access to vote according to his conscience.”—“ Yes, if he be of their party; otherwise to knock him down, that he may not vote on the wrong side of the question.” This being a method of keeping the peace which I did not admire, I very readily left this scene of noise and confusion, and we proceeded toward St. James’s.

“ Well,” said I, “ under all these circumstances it must require some courage and fortitude to give a free and independent vote : but no doubt many are sufficiently actuated by the zeal of patriotism.”—“ Alas ! (said Mr. G.) that is out of question. Gentlemen go to serve their friends ; tradesmen to oblige their customers ; and the lower classes for a paltry bribe, or perhaps only for the poor luxury of getting intoxicated without expence.”—“ Well ! those who sell their votes cannot, to be sure, complain of their representatives doing the same in another place.”—“ Yes, indeed, such is the inconsistency of human nature, that they who are the most guilty themselves are the loudest in complaining of others—but

we must not expect consistency from madmen !”

“ But how can such a number of poor mechanics and labourers afford to spend their time day after day in these scenes of riot and intemperance ? ” — “ Their intemperance, as I said, costs them nothing ; and spirituous liquors take away their appetite.”

“ But their families ! ” — “ O, their families ! when they engage in the cause of liberty they bequeath their families to the parish.”

“ Well ! indeed, I think we want a reform *out* of Parliament, as well as in ! ” — “ True ; but unless that reform be radical, and begin in the human heart, I fear it will avail but little.”

Thus we walked and talked till we came near the palace, where we found a vast concourse of curious spectators, and a multitude of splendid carriages, from which alighted noblemen and ladies of quality, some of them loaded with more gold and jewels than they could well carry ; and they pressed onward to the presence of Majesty through admiring ranks of both sexes.

“ Well,” said I, “ these people must lead very easy lives ! The one part seem to have nothing to do but to show themselves, and the other nothing but to admire them.”—
“ As to the lookers-on,” said he, “ these are not quite so idle as those you saw at Covent Garden. A great proportion are milliners, dress-makers, and others who come to see the fashions ; and whose business, for the next half-year, depends in great measure on what they see to-day. But as for the great, they go through a course of fatigue they are ill able to support. On such days as these they must rise early, perhaps at nine or ten o’clock.”—
“ Nine or ten o’clock !” cried I, interrupting, “ do you call that early rising ?”—“ Certainly,” said Mr. G. “ to those who are not accustomed to rise before twelve or one, and who, probably, never saw the sun rise in the whole course of their lives—a sight finer than a coronation !”—“ So it would be thought if it occurred but once in half a century. But these people cannot rise early, because they go late to-bed. Perhaps they

have been at the opera, to hear singing which they do not understand, or to see dancing which they admire only because it is fashionable. Or it may be the card-table detains them till three or four o'clock in the morning. They commonly retire to rest as much fatigued as husbandmen, but they do not sleep like them. Their exercise is laborious, but not healthful; they inhale the foul air of the crowded room instead of the sweet air of heaven."

We now watched our opportunity, and by slipping a very moderate fee into the hand of a good-natured yeoman (a true *beef-eater* in appearance), we got admitted into an inner room, and were much entertained by his facetious whispers as the company passed by. The first subject of his remark was an Irish Peer, who had been recently rewarded with a ribband and a pension. "What are the particular merits of his Lordship?" said I.—"Great borough interest. His Lordship returns five Irish members, and three English, and is always

attentive to his parliamentary duty—when-
ever the Minister requires it.”

“ But who are these Reverend Divines ?”
“ The first is a Bishop, who is going to pay
his respects on being translated to a new
see, for his dutiful behaviour in the House
of Peers ; and the other is Dean T——,
who goes to kiss hands on being appointed
to the bishopric which the other has just
left.”—“ And what is his particular claim
to ecclesiastical preferment ?”—“ O, he has
written a famous book, they say, in defence
of ministry.”—“ But has he given up his
deanery ?”—“ O no ! he holds that—I think
they say—in *commend* ’em.”*

“ Then he has a double cure of souls.”—
“ O no, Sir, he neither cures souls, nor
cares for them ; but he no doubt takes care
of his fees.”—“ You understand that, yeo-
man,” said I ; “ but you mean he holds
both places.”—“ Yes ; but one place must
soon hold him, and that a small one, for
he seems upon his last legs ; poor gentle-
man ! he is very asthmatic.”

* *In commendam.*

“ But what great Lady is this ? ” — “ Her Grace of S — , who was lately divorced from a Lord to marry a Duke. So they manage it among the quality. They change wives just as they please, and then prosecute each other for a divorce, to make their new connection lawful. Mercy upon us ! what wickedness there is among the great ! But if I and my dame fall out, we may fall in again, as the saying is ; for there are no divorces for the poor.”

“ And it is well there are not, yeoman,” said Mr. Grey ; “ for it would make terrible confusion among the lower orders. All would be for following the fashion, till a man would scarcely know his own wife, much less his children.” — “ O how lost,” said I, “ must such men be to the enjoyments, as well as the duties of domestic life ! ”

“ Did I not tell you,” said Mr. Grey, “ we should find plenty of madmen among the great, as well as in the lower classes ! ” “ Mad, indeed ! ” added our honest beef-eater ; “ I often think they must be mad to dangle attendance at this place year after

year, and often for nothing.—Here comes a Scotch *Barrow-knight*, with one leg in the grave, and the other hardly out, as the saying is. For thirty years, they say, he has *boo'd*, and *boo'd* in vain, to every *greet mon* who came into power; and now they think he is going off the stage, they have given him a sinecure, as they call it, for life; and so he comes hobbling here to return thanks, instead of going to church to say his prayers, and prepare for his latter end.”

“But here are two more clergymen!”—
“Yes, the first is a very popular divine, and the most *moving* preacher that you ever heard!—O, how I have heard him exclaim against the sin of being worldly minded!”—
“But what do you suppose may be his errand here?”—“O, he has heard of a better living, I dare say, just fallen vacant; unless he is come on a wrong scent, as he did once before, when he met at the door the doctor whose living he had been told was vacated by his death.”—“And what do you think was the doctor’s business?”—“O, he was *at fault* too, for he came after a deanery,

but having had the gout, he was too late, and the place was gone."

"What a sad thing it is," said I, "that clergymen who preach so much against the love of the world, should themselves be so attached to it!"—"Ah! Sir, but to my mind," said our guide, "preaching is much easier than practice. You see how mad these fine folks are after the world; but when death stares them in the face, and shakes his dart at them, O then it brings them to their right mind, and shows them the folly of their covetousness and ambition."

"It is well if it does," said Mr. Grey. "But who is that hobbling old gentleman behind?"

YEOMAN. An old Presbyterian minister—I think they call him a Noncon.—but I don't know what that means. They say his great-grandfather was a friend of King William, and his grandfather was intimate with George the First; and his family have attended court ever since.

MR. GREY. And what do you think he comes for ?

YEOMAN. O, nothing for himself ; and our good old King (God bless him !) is always glad to see him. He knows he never comes a-begging, unless it be for some unfortunate man, or some public charity.

Thus were we amused, and in some manner edified, by this talkative old man, until at length we became faint and weary, and sighed for "the sweet air of heaven," as Mr. Grey calls it. Then retreating from the crowd, we came again into St. James's Park, where our attention was caught by a company of the guards, performing their military evolutions. "Alas !" said I, "what a miserable trade is this of war !"—"A trade (said Mr. Grey) which had its origin in the corrupt passions of mankind.—'Whence come wars and fightings?' says St. James—'even of your lusts.'"—"It is," I replied, "a shocking thing that the destruction of our species should become a regular science, and the profession of so great

a part of mankind. What should we think of an academy for educating public executioners? and yet these are agents of the law, while the others are instruments of violence and destruction.”—“ True,” said Mr. Grey; “ but while one half the world studies the art of destruction, it is necessary that the other should learn the art of self-defence; and this is the only case in which I consider war to be lawful.”—“ But what think you of the principle of conquest, which has ennobled so many heroes?”—“ I think it the principle of a highwayman, only more criminal, because attended with infinitely greater evils.”

——“ One murder makes a villain;

“ Millions a hero.”——

“ But you must admit (said I) a great difference in the case; when we subdue barbarous nations, we confer on them the blessings of civil society.”—“ On whom,” said Mr. Grey, “ do you confer those blessings! on those you murder, or on those you enslave?”—I was thinking of an answer to this

question, when we were interrupted by a dancing bear passing by.—“ There,” said my friend, “ there is an animal conquered in order to confer on him the blessings of civil society—he is taught to *dance* !”

“ Pretty well wearied with our morning’s excursion, we now adjourned, as on the preceding day, to a coffee-house in our way, which, as we afterward found, was chiefly visited by literary characters, among whom were several authors and reviewers. Some of these seated themselves in a box adjoining ours, and excepting the gentlemen at the Stock Exchange, and the Covent Garden orators, I had met with no company so turbulent and noisy. One was reciting, with all the ardour of an antient bard, some verses from Mr. Scott’s new poem, and another spouted part of a scene in the last new play. What one admired, I found another censured, and a third justified ; and so it appeared that the literary world is as much divided in opinion as the political, and maintain their differences with as high a spirit. I found also, that they took the

same delight in exposing one another, as did the City Lawyer and Apothecary.

My attention was now principally attracted by an Author and a Bookseller, who were bargaining for a manuscript novel, which the former was extolling very highly, while the latter was labouring to depreciate it. "You authors are such vain creatures," said the Bookseller, "you never think you can be paid enough."—"And you Booksellers are so penurious," said the Author, "that you never think you can give little enough. You are determined that our unfortunate race shall starve from generation to generation."

BOOKSELLER. That is owing to your extravagance and want of economy. Because you have a little wit and taste, as you call it, you must set up for gentlemen, forsooth, and live in high style, with your wine and venison, like men of independent fortunes.

AUTHOR. Then it must be by the charity of others, for you will hardly allow us enough for bread and cheese and table beer.

BOOKSELLER. You gentlemen, who live by your wits, never consider what you can afford, if you can but get it.

AUTHOR. I grant that we have a spirit of generosity, if we had but your means to support it. But now what will you give for this manuscript? the fruit of three months close application.

BOOKSELLER. First let me get an estimate from the printer: and suppose the work should not sell——

AUTHOR. Suppose!—authors never suppose that. And if you get up the work in a good style, and advertize it well, I have no doubt but you will make a fortune by it.

BOOKSELLER. But I have very great doubts: however, I will get an estimate. I must give you something certain for your trouble; and if the work answers as you expect—you may rely on my generosity.

AUTHOR. A forlorn hope, indeed, for an author! You can afford to run the risk better than I can. Beside, you can insure success, you know: you have a share in two reviews, and in the Booksellers' News-

paper—and I will write a few puffs for you gratis.

I did not hear the conclusion of this agreement; but I observed two other gentlemen occupied in criticising, as I found, a new volume of sermons. One of them commended the manly eloquence of the style, and was for a favourable verdict; but the other *damned* the preacher for a Methodist, because he brought in the name of CHRIST so often.

This shocked my feelings, and I said to myself, "Surely if this man be not mad, he is something worse." Mr. Grey was actuated by the same feelings, and, as we passed, he gave a look which seemed to express, at least in my apprehension, anger mingled with compassion.

As we came out, I could not help remarking how much I was disappointed. I had hitherto entertained a high opinion of our literary censors, and had no idea that striplings, like these, were employed to pass public judgment on authors of more than twice their age and knowledge.

“It must be so,” said Mr. Grey; “the object of reviewing is to find fault, and those who have the least knowledge are often the most expert at this exercise. Experience convinces us of the difficulties which attend every part of science, and makes us cautious and modest in our censures. Neither have old men that flippancy of wit, or that dashing style, which recommends a review to the generality of readers of the present age. Of all mankind, young barristers are the best adapted for reviewers. That spirit of cavilling and ridicule which is cultivated at the bar, and is supposed necessary to the cross examination of a witness, suits admirably the other profession; and enables a writer, with very small acquirements, to attract vulgar admiration.” As to the profane wretch who drove us out of the coffee-house, we put him down among the incurables; and ceased to wonder at the indecent ridicule passed upon Evangelical religion by those who (like Saul of old) are exceedingly mad against its ministers and professors.

Bending our course again homeward, we passed Covent Garden Theatre just as the company were going in. "What do you think, Sir, of these people?" said I to my conductor—"Think!" said he, "that they are mad after pleasure, else they would not sit here for four or five hours together to be amused, and at last come out at midnight in a state of violent perspiration."—"They would think two or three hours," I replied, "insufferably long, in a place of worship." "True; but that would be to serve their Maker; this is to please themselves."—"This circumstance shews how much more delight they take in pleasing themselves than in serving God."—"Certainly."

On returning to our inn, we found a few of our friends waiting for us, and among the rest Mr. Smart, the young barrister, who had taken a conspicuous part in the debate of the preceding evening, and of whom it seems requisite to give the reader some information, which I have since accidentally acquired. Mr. Smart, it seems, was the son of a wealthy attorney in the country, who

sent him to study the law in one of our inns of court. For some time he applied closely to the duties of his profession, and his friends were sanguine in expecting he would make a figure at the bar; but just as he was about to take his station there, some young friends introduced him to the Green Room of the theatre, which gave him so strong a bias to the stage, to which he was always partial, that he determined to relinquish his legal profession, and try his fortune on the boards, where he flattered himself his person and talents might secure him popular applause. It was at this period, while his passion for the stage was at its height, that he fell into our company. No particular dispute arose this evening, till I mentioned our passing by the play-house.

“ I wonder, Sir,” said he, “ addressing Mr. Grey with a sneer—“ I wonder you did not take your *ward* into the Theatre !”

MR. GREY. Is that because you suppose I should find more mad people there than any where else, and so obtain the best evidence in support of my theory ?

MR. SMART. No, indeed, Sir. I consider the stage as a very rational amusement, and an excellent school of morals and of manners. *Veluti in speculum*, you know, is our motto, and we hold up the mirror to nature —

MR. GREY. And must be very much ashamed, I should suppose, if you should happen to look into it yourselves?

MR. SMART. No, indeed, Sir, I see nothing to be ashamed of.

Here our young actor began to expatiate largely on the utility of the stage, and the morality of its performances; reciting passages from Shakespeare and other celebrated dramatists, which he considered as specimens of fine moral sentiment, until he at last worked himself up to say, with no small energy—"and BY GOD, Sir, there are more fine moral passages in Shakespeare than in half the sermons in the kingdom!"

"And this, Sir," said Mr. Grey, who had heard him in patient silence—"this, I suppose, is a specimen of the morality you learn

at the theatre—to profane the holy name of God on every trivial occasion.

MR. SMART. I beg, pardon, Sir, for swearing in your presence ; but your severe attack on my favourite amusement agitated my feelings, and threw me off my guard.

MR. GREY. And this gives me, Sir, another specimen of your theatrical morality, which does not keep your passions within the bounds of reason ; and though I must do you the justice to bear witness, that your mind revolts at a breach of good manners, you shew no compunction on having violated the divine precept, “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.”

MR. SMART. You are severe, Sir, even when you compliment ; but you cannot deny that many plays contain excellent lessons of morality, particularly Shakespeare’s.

MR. GREY. Yes ; but as Dr. Johnson says, “there is so much wool about the gold, that it is doubtful whether it be worth the seeking.” However, I am willing to render

justice to all, and can admire genius and eloquence wherever I can find them. But I am fearful my remarks may throw you off your guard again, and I should be sorry to be the occasion of your committing sin, even in the defence of virtue.

MR. SMART. Do not fear, Sir; I wish to argue the point with you calmly, and will be more guarded in my expressions.

MR. GREY. Then, Sir, my first objection to your theatrical morals is their inconsistency. While some plays inculcate sound morals, others teach the grossest vices; and that not accidentally, but in the most splendid characters. Even Addison and Home, while they inculcate the sternest principles of Roman virtue, offer an apology for Suicide.

MR. SMART. As to that, Sir, is it not universally agreed, that Suicide is in all cases criminal?

MR. GREY. Not at the theatre, I believe; but our Bible says—"Thou shalt do no murder—do thyself no harm." This, however, is one of the mildest charges I

have against your plays. In many cases they inculcate not only the madness of heroism, but the polytheism of the Gentiles, and the worship of the filthiest idols.

MR. SMART. O, Sir! this is only a poetical licence. Nobody now worships those imaginary beings which form the elegant mythology of Greece and Rome, much less their material images. When we inculcate the worship of the gods, we mean to teach religion in general —

MR. GREY. I believe, Sir, your religion is of a very general kind. "Jehovah, Jove, or Lord," are the same with you; but if you do not make converts to your elegant mythology, you prostitute many to the beastly idolatry of wine and women.

MR. SMART. As to that, Sir, wine and women would always have their votaries, if there were no theatre. But you do not deal fairly with us. You seize every opportunity of censure, but take no notice of the many beautiful moral sentiments which abound in our dramatic writers.

MR. GREY. Suppose there were a pulpit

in this metropolis where men were taught the principles of republicanism and anarchy; would you think it a sufficient apology that the preacher was very eloquent, and mingled some good moral precepts with his sedition?

MR. SMART. Certainly not.

MR. GREY. Then neither is the commixture of a few moral sentiments with your licentious and profane maxims an atonement for them: however, you not only give precept, but example; for your most splendid and popular characters are generally vicious and profane.

MR. SMART. We do not exhibit perfect characters, because we know they cannot be copied; we describe men as they really are.

MR. GREY. And the worse characters you exhibit, the easier it will be to imitate them; but it may be remarked, that men can act wrong without teaching, and need no examples to lead them into vice.

MR. SMART. Well, Sir, whatever you may have to say against the theatre in a religious

point of view, you must acknowledge it an excellent school of human wisdom ; and more of the world may be learned there in a few evenings, than in the experience of so many years.

MR. GREY. This is in some measure granted ; but the question is, Sir, whether there be not more evil learned than good ?

MR. SMART. No, Sir ; here, by seeing the various frauds and deceptions practised in the world, we are warned against them ; and virtuous, but unguarded females, by seeing the arts of the seducer exposed, learn effectually to avoid them.

MR. GREY. And here, Sir, knaves learn the arts of villainy, and gallants the most successful methods of seduction.

MR. SMART. But a virtuous person will take the good, and leave the evil.

MR. GREY. But I fear the far greater part will take the evil, and leave the good.

MR. SMART. That is, because you suppose human nature to have a dreadful preponderance to evil.

MR. GREY. I think there can be no doubt

of its preponderating in *your* school; for where you can produce one converted by the theatre to virtue, I can produce many perverted thereby to vice.

At this moment a gentleman entered, who had, on the preceding evening, appeared cheerful and communicative; but now gloom brooded on his countenance, and grief had sealed his lips.

“I hope you are well, Sir,” said I, cheerfully. He bowed his head in silence.—“I fear, Sir,” said I, “something very unpleasant has occurred.” He shook his head, and sighed.

MR. GREY. We inhabit a world of sin and sorrow, and ought to live in the daily expectation of losses and disappointments; and not to be overwhelmed when they come upon us—“as if some strange thing had happened to us.”

“O, Sir, my heart is full,” said he, “it will surely burst!”

MR. GREY. Perhaps, Sir, if you give expression to your grief, it may relieve you. Grief divided will be lessened; and if your

trouble is of that nature as to admit the good offices of a friend, I should be happy to serve you.—“And so should I, Sir,” said Mr. Smart, who was not a little affected with the scene.

“I have a daughter, Sir—an only daughter.”

“And she is taken ill, perhaps, or has died suddenly.”

“Worse than that, Sir.”

“Worse! Sir,” rejoined Mr. Smart; “there are not many things in this world worse than death.”

The old gentleman, whose name was Thompson, finding himself thus drawn into conversation, consented to unbosom himself.

MR. THOMPSON. My girl, Sir, has been three months on a visit to the daughter of a friend; and when I called this morning, expecting her to run into my arms as usual—O!—I cannot proceed.

MR. GREY. I hope she has not been seduced.

MR. THOMPSON. Alas, Sir, a gay young

spark, an officer in the Guards, ingratiated himself into her esteem, and by taking her to plays, and other places of fashionable amusements, has weaned her mind from the simple enjoyments of a country life, and made her dread the thoughts of returning home with me, as was intended.

MR. SMART. I hope, Sir, he will act honourably by her.

MR. THOMPSON. I know not what to hope. If he does, in all probability it will be only because he understands her father has some property to bestow on her.

MR. SMART. Well, Sir, but if she marries, all will be well then, and I hope you will forgive her indiscretions.

MR. THOMPSON. It is not difficult for me to forgive, Sir; but, alas! with a taste thus vitiated, I have no hope of her being happy: for what is there in a life of dissipation that can confer happiness?

MR. SMART. But, Sir, I hope her principles are not corrupted.

MR. THOMPSON. How can I hope this,

Sir, when she has been in that school of vice and infidelity—the play-house?

MR. SMART. Dear Sir, what harm can she learn there?

MR. THOMPSON. There, Sir, she might learn to jest with sacred things, to despise authorities, and to seek her happiness in the present life, without regard to the duties of religion, or the hopes of another world.

MR. SMART. O dear, Sir! there are many religious persons who go to the play-house.

MR. THOMPSON. Ah, Sir! there I have been deceived. I knew my friend was a plain, steady man, and so religious as to be dubbed a Methodist by his neighbours; but he had the misfortune to lose his wife, who was an excellent woman, a few months since, which was one reason of sending my daughter to be with the family.

MR. SMART. And the girls, I suppose, are not quite so grave and religious as their mother was!

MR. THOMPSON. Young gentleman, I

cannot jest on this subject, my feelings are too much agitated.

Here I could not avoid interfering.—
“Sir,” said I, “this gentleman and my friend were engaged in disputing on the lawfulness of the stage just as you entered, and he feels deeply interested in its defence.”

MR. GREY. I suppose, Sir, the family being religious, you had no suspicion of your daughter being drawn into such gay company?

MR. THOMPSON. Not the least, Sir. In the country we have sometimes the strolling players visit us, and they collect together the idle and the thoughtless; but professors of religion are ashamed to be seen among them.

MR. GREY. True, Sir; but here, where people's conduct cannot be so strictly watched, it is no uncommon thing for them to serve God on the Sabbath, and the devil during all the week beside—to play the saint one day, and the fool on the other six.

MR. SMART. Quarter, Gentlemen! two to one is unfair—and both so severe too!

MR. THOMPSON. I feel keenly on this subject. This young fellow, by the advantage of a good figure and genteel address, contrived to introduce himself to my friend's family, as the cousin of a young man who pays his addresses to one of my friend's daughters; and having rendered himself agreeable, they were ready to accompany him wherever he and his relations thought proper. A taste for gaiety is soon created. When my daughter had been two or three times at the theatre, she grew fond of it; and was never easy, I am informed, when the weather permitted, without spending two or three evenings a-week at such amusements. Then to make her company more agreeable to her new acquaintances, she practised the fashionable modes of dancing, and learned to play at cards; so that, in short, she formed such a taste for pleasure, that sooner than return to 'the humdrum of a country life,' as she called it, she has taken this rash step, and thrown herself into this fellow's arms.

MR. SMART. But, Sir, if their tastes agree,

and they both seek happiness in the same way, I see not why they may not yet live happily together.

MR. THOMPSON. Alas, Sir ! in the first place, I well know, by experience, that the world has no happiness to confer. The most it can do, in any case, is to make us forget our miseries. And in the next place, I am sensible that when young persons of this turn live constantly together, they soon become wretched. When a woman comes to have a young family, she cannot attend places of amusement—at least not so constantly as before. The husband gets satiated with the company of his wife, and is a gallant no more; unless, indeed, he meets with a new object for his affections, and deceives and ruins another thoughtless female.

MR. SMART. But, Sir, you view only the gloomy side of the question: we should hope for the best in all such cases.

MR. GREY. I hope, Sir, you are acquainted with sources of consolation equal to your trials. You know “a name better than that of sons and daughters.”

MR. THOMPSON. O, Sir! but her precious and immortal soul!—it is that I tremble for.

MR. SMART. But, Sir, you do not consider your daughter as given up to perdition for taking one imprudent step.

MR. THOMPSON. By no means; but I fear that step may be the first only of a series; that she will soon totally forget the principles in which she has been educated, and give up herself wholly to the world.

MR. GREY. I do not consider your fears groundless; yet, on the other hand, I should hope a different result. Trials and disappointments may be the means of leading her back to seek for consolation in the religion she has deserted; and when she comes to her ‘right mind,’ there is no doubt but she will be glad to return to you, and to her heavenly Father.

The afflicted gentleman wished it might be so; and here he fell into conversation with Mr. Grey, of a cast too grave and religious for the rest of the company; and, perhaps, for my reader, who may wish, with

them, to divert their attention to other topics. Whether the natural aversion of mankind to consider their most important interests, and to the study of subjects intimately connected with the nature of their immortal spirits, and a state of future being—whether this be not another proof that the mind is much deranged from its primitive state, may be a farther subject of enquiry.

THIRD DAY.

ON the third morning my guide again directed our course westward, in order to look in at the Courts of Westminster.—Whether he expected there to find any proofs of his hypothesis he did not say, but we happened to drop into Westminster Hall at the opening of a trial which was to us peculiarly interesting. It was on a question of lunacy, and all the ingenuity of counsel was exerted on both sides, to prove and disprove the sanity of a lady who had made a will very contrary to the wish of her relations.

The Counsel employed against the will, among other topics, urged the eccentricity of the deceased lady in her manner of dress and behaviour, and her perpetual habit of

talking, whether in company or alone. On the other hand, the advocates of the lady's sanity repelled these arguments, by remarking, humorously, that if every lady who dressed whimsically was to be esteemed insane, a great part of the sex would be implicated; and if loquacity was a proof of derangement, the whole sex might be involved in the charge. At length the Judge, with much candour and patient discrimination, summed up the evidence. Little stress, he thought, should be laid on a woman's dress and conversation. There were some points in the case, however, which appeared to him far more important. It came out, by the evidence of her domestics, that the lady had lost all correct ideas of the true value of money; and had acquired a habit of hoarding bad halfpence and farthings, which she called guineas and half-guineas, with a fixed contempt for gold and silver.

Another circumstance, of great weight in this case, was, that she appeared to be entirely thoughtless of futurity; on the pre-

sent and the past she could converse fluently, but as to the future, her mind appeared to be a perfect blank.

The last point, on which the Court laid peculiar stress, was, that the unhappy lady had taken a particular aversion to her best friends—even her own father, brother, and sister, and was continually suspecting some design to ruin her, while they were making every exertion to serve her. This, he remarked, was a common symptom of insanity, and these circumstances, taken in connection with the eccentricities which had been mentioned, and confirmed by the opinions of the medical men who had attended her, fully satisfied his mind that she was insane, and her last will and testament in question consequently *null and void*.

We did not wait for the verdict of the Jury, having other business before us; but we afterwards heard it was, as might be expected, in unison with the judgment of the Court.

When we came out, I remarked to my friend how much the counsel appeared in

earnest for their respective clients, as if each were perfectly satisfied of the justice of his cause, and was confident of success; though I made no doubt but they could have changed briefs with ease, and each have pleaded with equal zeal on the opposite side. And this remark led us to the enquiry, whether the arts of counsel were not an impediment to public justice. "Surely (said I) if their object were to investigate truth, it would, in general, be easy to come at it, without so much sophistry and chicanery."—"True, (said Mr. Grey;) but the humane principle of our laws is, that every man shall be considered innocent till he is proved guilty. It therefore gives every man the opportunity, either by himself or by his legal advocate, to make the best possible defence, while the opposite party is allowed the same professional aid to detect error, or to discover guilt. There are cases sometimes so grossly bad, that a respectable advocate will throw up his brief, and give in the cause; but they are very unusual, except where he has

been deceived by his own client. But were a barrister always to give up a cause when he finds it weak, and the opposite side supported with better evidence, he would not only betray his trust, but even justice itself would sometimes be defeated; for upon deeper investigation, it frequently appears that the most plausible story is not the true one."

"But I should think the haughty, brow-beating manner of many of our public pleaders is not the best adapted to elicit truth, as it must often abash and confound a modest witness, and so defeat the ends of justice."—"No doubt it must, (replied Mr. Grey;) but then, on the other hand, it sometimes intimidates and embarrasses a suborned witness, and brings the truth to light. It is the duty of the Court, I conceive, to protect a modest witness from this brow-beating, and our Judges will sometimes interfere for this end, though, I confess, not so often as I could wish; but then we must consider, that they are so used to the practice of cross-questioning while at

the bar, that they may not be so sensible of its effects on a candid and ingenuous mind as we are. At the same time, it is much to be lamented that such methods are often necessary to detect prevarication, and that the sacred nature of an oath should be so much disregarded."

"There is not a crime (said I) among all our national sins more to be lamented than the prevalence of perjury. What do you suppose, Sir, to be the principal cause?"

"The first and great cause (replied my friend) is the infidelity of the human heart. Men supposing the Deity, if indeed they admit one, to be an imperfect, inconsistent being like themselves, are ready to say, 'Tush! God does not see—or he will not regard.'—But I cannot help thinking, the degree to which official and *customary* oaths (as they are called) are multiplied, and the very irreverent manner in which they are administered in this country, very much increase the evil."

"I believe so, and I wish that some man of integrity and leisure, with full means of

information, would deeply investigate the subject, and place it in a strong light before the legislature and the world."

"Oaths should never be administered (said Mr. Grey) on slight occasions; and when requisite, should be expressed in language concise as well as clear; and not only pronounced with great solemnity, but the party made to repeat the words. When the administrator hurries over a long and complicated form of words, which is often not heard, and when heard, not well understood, how can he expect it to be properly regarded by the person who kisses the book, or perhaps his thumb only instead, as some persons have been wicked enough to boast of doing?

"As to *customary* oaths, I have heard that many respectable tradesmen send their youngest or most ignorant servants to take the necessary oaths at the public offices. They do this as a part of their duty to their masters, who themselves shrink from taking them, as knowing they should be involved in prevarication, if not downright perjury."

"A miserable subterfuge, truly, (said

Mr. Grey;) but this cannot be done in *official* oaths, which I fear are merely considered as ceremonies of inauguration, and not as rules of future conduct; indeed, I am told the oaths required of constables, parish officers, &c. are so strong, as to require that energy and decision in the suppression of vice, and keeping good order, to which few minds are equal.

“ Beside this (added Mr. Grey) the test of an oath, which with us is the New Testament, can be obligatory on those only who believe it; and for this reason we do not tender it to a Turk, a Pagan, or a Jew, or to an avowed Atheist; yet this is the only test we offer to the very numerous class of Deists, who have no more faith in its divinity than Jews themselves, and who pay less regard to such oaths than to their word of honour. Indeed, a solemn appeal to the Supreme Being, as is practised in some countries, without the Popish ceremony of kissing a book for which they have no veneration, and the design of which many do not understand, would, in my opinion, be

far more regarded by men in general. The Papists who admit the New Testament to be divine, condemn our version as heretical ; and the Jews, who venerate the Old, regard our translation as erroneous ; in what light, therefore, but as a solemn mockery, can they consider such a form ?”

Thus we went on conversing, till we came to the next place my friend had in view, which was—a fashionable auction-room.

Here we met with a motley company of both sexes, and of various characters—Nobility, *virtuosi*, *literati*, and sharpers. The first lot put up after we came in was a black-letter copy of one of our early English poets—a work itself confessedly of no merit, and in a type and dialect which very few could read : but then it was one of the first attempts at printing in this country ; a literary man, therefore, bid up to ten guineas for it, and seemed rejoiced to find it knocked down to him.

The next lot was an illuminated Missal of the twelfth century, written on vellum,

perfectly useless, it is true, but beautifully illuminated :—an amateur, therefore, cheerfully gave ten pounds for it.

A classic was now put up—very scarce—and supposed to be *unique* ; but a young nobleman denied this, declaring he had the fellow to it, in equal preservation. This, however, seemed questionable to others ; and whether from regard for the book, or opposition to his lordship, the price was run up to five and twenty pounds : my lord, however, was the happy purchaser, and paid down the money ; but no sooner did he obtain possession, than he took his pen-knife, and cutting out all the leaves, scattered them on a large fire, which was near him, and then exclaimed, with an oath, “ Now is my copy an *unique*, and worth at least fifty guineas ! ” Not being accustomed to this method of raising the value of books, I stood quite confounded ; while some of the company seemed to smile at his lordship’s simplicity. For my part, when I came to my recollection, I put him down as a member of our

insane world, which I was now satisfied extended to the higher classes of society.

The last lot put up to-day in the library was a fine copy of Euclid, ascertained to have belonged formerly to Sir Isaac Newton. This excited an evident sensation in the company, and the auctioneer enlarged with great eloquence on the value of the book, as arising from the celebrity of its former possessor; beside this, Mr. Puff assured the company that this book contained a note, in the hand-writing of our great philosopher, and a problem worked by him, which made it of inestimable value, though, for obvious reasons, it must be inspected only by the purchaser. Curiosity and veneration for Sir Isaac soon raised this book to a higher price than the preceding, and after a long contest it was sold for thirty-two pounds. The purchaser, who was well known, immediately gave his draft to the auctioneer, and retired to examine his original note and problem. I saw him again afterwards; but from his looks and hasty

manner of passing through the room, I concluded that he did not wish for such another bargain.

The auctioneer now proceeded to the curiosities of his museum, which afforded great scope for his oratorical powers.— Among these I particularly admired a fossil bone of a non-descript animal, which he assured us had been extinct for many ages; and which, from the state and circumstances under which it was found, could not be less than ten thousand years old. Beside this, he shewed us, in a fossil state, the wing-bone of a fowl, which he said the Patriarch Noah threw out of the ark, after he had picked it for his dinner.

“These are wonderful curiosities,” said I to Mr. Grey; “but how is our orator able so exactly to ascertain their age?”

“Auctioneers,” replied he, “always claim the privilege of lying in the rostrum; and they have this excuse, that the fact is so generally known, that none but the weakest of mankind are deceived by them. In the present instance, however, I consider

Mr. Puff's wit merely as a *fling* at the Mosaic History, and a ridicule of revealed religion."

"I have noticed lately (said I) a strong disposition in scientific men—(and this man is only *aping* a philosopher)—to contradict the Mosaic account of the creation, particularly as relates to the antiquity of our globe."

"Philosophers (replied Mr. G.) have always shewn a disposition to contradict the word of God; but as I am satisfied with the evidences of revelation, so have I always thought that the Maker of the world must best know when he made it."

"But geologists cannot reconcile with the phænomena of nature, particularly as to fossils, the notion of its having existed not quite six thousand years."

"And moral philosophers, Sir, cannot reconcile the phænomena of the *moral* world with the notion of its having existed so long. How is it (say they) that in a world that has subsisted so many ages, knowledge has made so little progress? and

many of the sciences are yet in their infancy?—But both reason from uncertain theory. The scripture deluge, in my opinion, when properly understood, answers both objections. The distance of four thousand years appears to me abundantly sufficient to account for most of the fossil appearances we meet with; and the same event, as it gave the world a kind of new beginning, and must have greatly interrupted the progress of science and of the arts, accounts for their not having attained greater perfection.

“But what think you of the fact of certain species of animals having become extinct?”

“I think it possible, but doubtful. We are continually discovering strange animals, heretofore unknown, and it is not impossible that many may still exist in those parts of the earth and ocean which are as yet imperfectly explored; other animals, by artificial breeding and change of climate, may be so much altered as not to be known for the same species. That the remains of

animals should be found where the animals themselves are now strangers, is perfectly natural, for it is highly probable, that by the great deluge, and perhaps by more partial changes, seas may have given place to many parts of the continent, and parts of the old continents have sunk below the ocean ; and perhaps something like this may be implied in the foundations of the great deep being broken up, while the windows of heaven were opened to pour down in cataracts all the waters from above."

" But I think, Sir, it has been asserted that we have no fossil remains of the human frame, which seems very extraordinary, if the whole world were drowned."

" So it has been said ; but as very lately some fossil human skeletons, almost complete, have been discovered, I should suppose there is an end to that objection, and to the inferences drawn from it. We have, however, penetrated so little way into the globe which we inhabit, that he must be a rash man who pretends to say what may or may not be contained nearer to the centre—

to which we have never penetrated a thousandth part."

While thus conversing together in a corner of the room, several lots were disposed of, perhaps as precious as the bones above-mentioned; but the first which arrested our attention was a small silver crucifix, at the bottom of which was incased a small piece of the real cross on which our Saviour suffered—as Mr. Auctioneer solemnly assured us. A gentleman present expressed some surprize at the confidence with which this was asserted; but a naval officer present swore he had no doubt of it, for he had himself seen, on the Continent, enough of the same wood to build a man of war. A Catholic lady present appeared much hurt at this profane remark; and casting an anxious look toward the object, bade five guineas; a Jew dealer in curiosities made a small advance, which being noticed with some astonishment, he said it would melt for more money; the lady was, however, determined to have the object, and especially to rescue her silver Saviour from the Jew's

melting-pot, and therefore advanced at once to ten guineas, and had it immediately handed to her.

A Madona and Child, set with brilliants, and adorned with a genuine lock of the Virgin Mary's hair, was our next article, and was eagerly purchased by a debauched nobleman, whose appearance seemed to say he bought this virgin to atone for the injury he had done to others.

We now withdrew from this scene of curiosities, and after taking some slight refreshment in our way, passed on to one of the fashionable Scientific Institutes. Here we found a very genteel company, engaged in fashionable *tête-à-tête*; and the first character which engaged our attention was 'a sweet-scented beau,' the perfect counterpart to Shakespeare's *puss-gentleman*. He was dressed, powdered, and perfumed, to attract the admiration of the ladies, and furnished with a glass, suspended from his button-hole, that he might in turn admire them. I have since learned, that this young gentleman, who was of a noble family, was origi-

nally intended for the army, but having a strong antipathy to those 'vile guns,' which the soldiers use, he turned his attention to the church, and was waiting the lapse of a good benefice, in the gift of the family, to enter upon his profession—not as a laborious parish priest—nor as a clerical sportsman, for he would never risk his precious life in a fox-hunt, nor could he bear the smell of gunpowder—but in a snug rectory, where he should have little duty to perform, with much time for ease and enjoyment, and the prospect of rising in his profession.

So far as we could judge by his conversation, heraldry seemed to have been his favourite study; we observed he was earnestly recommending it to a young gentleman, whose family had been but recently ennobled, in consequence of the naval exploits of his father, and who seemed anxious to understand the honours which he had so lately attained. The difference between these two characters was striking: the latter having been bred up in a man of war, was rough and awkward in his manners, which

made him a perfect contrast to the excessive refinement of the other.

We now moved to the opposite side of the room, and lent an ear to a group of ladies, who were conversing on the novels they had lately read. One praised the sweet simplicity of Mrs. Opie, and another the characteristic *naiveté* of Miss Edgeworth; a third admired the ingenious plots of Madam D'Arblay, and a fourth the terrific sublimity of Mrs. Radcliffe. One thing I observed, as the necessary result of a course of reading confined to fictitious works, that none of the ladies appeared to derive their knowledge of human nature so much from real life as from the heroes of imagination and romance; that consequently every object which attracted their notice was viewed through a medium highly coloured, and they abounded in the use of adjectives in the superlative degree. Every thing which pleased them was charming, exquisite, incomparable, immense; and whatever displeased them, horrid and disgusting in the extreme.

The lecturer now appeared, and, after a proper introduction, gave a masterly exposition of the new and fashionable science of Galvanism, which he confirmed by a variety of experiments, particularly on animal substances. One thing, however, particularly offended me, and I took the opportunity to mention it to my friend as soon as we left the lecture-room. My humanity was hurt to think of the tortures to which the poor animals must have been subjected by his experiments.

“Were you alarmed then, (said Mr. Grey,) for the feelings of a dead frog?”—“No, Sir, (I replied;) but though the experiments we saw were on the limbs of dead objects, I understood many of his private experiments were on the living animal, and must have occasioned the most exquisite tortures.”—“I fear so,” returned Mr. G. “but you know the argument in favour of such experiments, from their utility to mankind.”—“I do, Sir; but I suspect both its truth and equity. I believe a great part of the cruel experiments of these philosophers

originate in a vain and idle curiosity, and seldom prove of any practical utility to man; and that the living subject is often experimented upon, when the dead subject might answer every useful purpose."

"God forbid I should be the advocate of cruelty!" replied my friend. "How far it may be lawful to inflict sufferings on other creatures to relieve our own, is much too delicate a question for me to determine; but of this I am confident, that to torture them for mere curiosity, or for any purposes of science not really important to our being or happiness, is utterly unjustifiable—or, in other words, *criminal*, in the sight of God."

"That, Sir, I fear, would be no object with our lecturer; for though he talked much of the activity and benevolence of Nature, I do not recollect that he once mentioned the doctrine of a Supreme Being, or made any allusion to the display of his wisdom and power in the works of creation and providence. Whether the gentleman be an Atheist, or is afraid to offend the atheistical principles of his audience, I can-

not say. If the latter be the case, and he is ashamed of his Maker, while I pity the weakness of the man, I must confess it requires no ordinary degree of courage in a modern philosopher to inculcate the doctrine of a Deity, and his universal providence, before a fashionable assembly, where—his presence is never welcome, nor his name uttered, except in some profane exclamation. It is the fashion also to account for every thing in nature and philosophy, without the intervention of a divine Agent, and to make any theological allusions is contrary to the rules of scientific societies. May God forgive the creatures who are ashamed of their Creator!"

This was the substance of our conversation as we walked from the Institution to the house of Dr. Scott, an eminent physician from the North, and the friend of Mr. Grey, with whom we had been invited to dine together. After dinner the conversation turned on the lecture we had heard, and the remarks we had made on the want of reference to a first cause on scientific

DR. SCOTT. No, Sir : I presume you do not dissect the body till the soul is gone.

MR. GREY. But we are, not, Sir, to be laughed out of our religion. Whether the doctrine of a soul and a future state be demonstrable or not by reason, we believe it on the authority of revelation, and before you can deprive us of it, you must set aside the evidences of Christianity.

MR. KEEN. As to that, Sir, you are very welcome to be a Christian, if you please ; but I feel no inclination to give up my reason, and swallow mysteries and absurdities.

MR. GREY. With respect to absurdities, I will promise you, Sir, to renounce Christianity myself, if you can shew in it any absurdities equal to those inseparable from infidelity.

MR. KEEN. I confess I did not expect a challenge of this kind. I have been purging my creed these twelve years, and I really thought I had sufficiently purified it from absurdities.

MR. GREY. Perhaps you thought, that by believing nothing you could be in no danger of believing too much; but the mind must believe something. We cannot seriously persuade ourselves that we are non-entities, and that the world around us is a dream. At least, Sir, I hope that your creed is not purified to this high state of refinement.

MR. KEEN. Not quite, Sir—at least, I believe my own existence.

DR. SCOTT. And that of a Supreme Being, I should hope.

MR. KEEN. Perhaps not in the sense in which you Christians would explain it. I believe in an infinite and eternal universe,

“Whose body nature is, and God the soul.”

MR. GREY. Yes, Sir, I perceive your creed is quite philosophical; but do you believe in an intelligent first cause?

MR. KEEN. I do, Sir.

MR. GREY. Then you unite intelligence with power.

MR. KEEN. Certainly.

MR. GREY. And do you also endow your

great first cause with goodness and compassion?

MR. KEEN. I believe him to be so endowed.

MR. GREY. And do you number justice among his attributes.

MR. KEEN. I certainly attribute to him no cruelty or injustice:—but I perceive your aim, Sir, and will tell you frankly wherein we differ. The great Being whom I adore is far exalted above the local Deity of Jews and Christians. He is the Father of the Universe, and confines not his attention to our system, much less to our little planet, which might perish, with a thousand others, without any loss to him.

MR. GREY. Truly, Sir, he would be no loser; but you think it beneath his dignity to stoop to the offices of care and kindness allotted to him in our Scriptures.

MR. KEEN. Sir, the God in whom I believe does not stoop to count *hairs* and *sparrows*.

MR. GREY. You do not suppose, then, that he meddles with our family affairs?

MR. KEEN. No; nor national neither. He has endued his creatures with capacities and means of happiness, and leaves them to pursue it or not as they think proper;—just as you would make a machine, and leave it to perform its functions.

MR. GREY. He does not interfere then in the distribution of justice in the earth?

MR. KEEN. By no means: he leaves mankind to manage the concerns of this world, as he has no doubt committed the management of other worlds to their respective inhabitants.

MR. GREY. Then it is not likely that he will call them to account for their behaviour to him, or towards each other.

MR. KEEN. I hope not; and indeed why should he? They cannot injure him; and if they hurt each other, they must take the consequences.

MR. GREY. You seem careful of the happiness of your Supreme Being. You wish to rid him of all the care and trouble of managing this little world.

MR. KEEN. Certainly, Sir. It is de-

grading to the character of the Supreme Being to employ him in such trifling concerns; as much, and even far more, than it would degrade the monarch of the British empire, to employ himself in the workshop of a manufacturer.

MR. GREY. You honour the Deity then, Sir, by robbing him of his attributes.

MR. KEEN. How do you mean, Sir?

MR. GREY. I will endeavour to explain myself. To save him trouble and perplexity in the government of the world, you divest him of his power, his wisdom, and his justice: for what can cause him trouble or perplexity but weakness of power, or of intellect? Suppose infinite wisdom and might concentrated in the same Being, and whence can difficulties arise? Can any thing be hard for Almighty Power; or perplexing to an infinite understanding? — You even give up his equity and justice, to save him the trouble of examining into the conduct and motives of mankind; and his goodness can be exercised only in affairs of

no difficulty. This is acting very kind, Sir, toward your Maker !

MR. KEEN. I understand your sneer, Sir ; but were I to ridicule your opinions in the same way, I should be called profane—or I could retaliate.

MR. GREY. Very likely, Sir ; but I conceive there is a wide difference in the two cases. When you ridicule religion, you ridicule the Author of your being, and of all your enjoyments ; but when I ridicule your imaginary God, pray whom do I offend ? By your own account, he does not trouble himself with human affairs ; he cannot, therefore, regard my conversation.—But I have no objection to confine myself to more serious arguments ; and here, Sir, permit me to say, that I consider your system as the most irrational, and the most melancholy, that can be conceived. In short, Sir, I consider infidels as madmen, and their madness as the worst species of melancholy.

MR. KEEN. Bravo, Sir ! Pray go on, for my curiosity is excited to hear how you

will attempt to prove us merry fellows melancholy.

MR. GREY. But previously, Sir, permit me to state some of the absurdities attendant on your opinions. First, you are compelled by the doctrine of causes and effects to admit a first cause; yet from that cause you subtract the power necessary to produce the effects to be accounted for. For instance, in admitting a Supreme Being, you admit of infinite power and wisdom, and yet you restrict the exercise of these very attributes. You allow him to make the whole, yet you consider it beneath him to be conversant with all its parts: you allow him to govern the universe, yet leave all the different worlds to govern for themselves. As a philosopher, you must know that a whole includes all its parts; and if the great God is not intimately acquainted with even the minutest parts of the creation, he cannot know the whole: and if his agency does not extend to every part of the universe he has made, the whole might be thrown into the most dreadful confusion by a thousand

accidental circumstances. The life of a monarch, and the fate of an empire, have, ere now, depended on a feather or a fly.

MR. KEEN. Sir, I do not deny the Supreme Being the power of controul ; I only demur on his interference, except on grand and extraordinary occasions.

MR. GREY. But the most ordinary occasions may produce the most serious events. Besides, if you admit his power of controul, and yet deny that he interferes to punish the most flagrant crimes, where is his equity and goodness ?

MR. KEEN. You admit, as well as I do, that he suffers innumerable evils to prevail daily and hourly, without attempting to prevent them.

MR. GREY. Certainly I do : but then I believe that these are parts of his infinitely complicated scheme ; and that it is his prerogative to bring good out of evil, as well as events the most important out of circumstances apparently the most trivial : but the grand and *only* doctrine which can ‘ justify

the ways of God to man,' is that of a future state and a final judgment.

MR. KEEN. I am sure this would make me melancholy enough, if I believed it:—but I leave you to encounter those horrors.

MR. GREY. Ah, Sir! it might be well for you if you could thus easily get rid of them for ever. But I proceed to shew the melancholy tendency of your system in the present life, independent of its future consequences. And when for a moment I consider myself as an isolated being, deserted or cut off from the protection of the Deity, I seem plunged into the depth of despair and misery. Well might the Apostle say of those who are 'without God,' that they are 'without hope' also.

MR. KEEN. But do we not see mankind suffer the same miseries as if there were no God at all?

MR. GREY. It is difficult to suppose any thing without a Deity—it is an infinite series of effects without a cause: but admit the idea of an infinite and intelligent Go-

vernor of the world, and the very idea throws a glory upon every object around, and half annihilates the miseries you complain of. Bring me now a *Christian* (I mean in the full sense of the term) apparently the most miserable upon earth—select him from a workhouse or an infirmary, and examine him on the state of his mind in his affliction, and you will find him full of *hope*, if not of peace and joy: he is afflicted with infirmity and disease, perhaps tormented with excruciating pain; but he believes, at least he *hopes*, that all things are working together for his good;—yea, that they shall work out for him “a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

MR. KEEN. But if Christianity be so felicitous a system, how is it that so many are driven out of their senses by it?

MR. GREY. I am not afraid to meet you on that question; for I suppose you will, as a professional man, admit that intense thinking, upon any subject, may be too much for a mind constitutionally weak.

MR. KEEN. That is, you admit that too much religion makes people mad.

MR. GREY. No, Sir; it is rather the want of religion that does this. At some times, particularly in sickness, conscience depicts our guilt in such strong and vivid colours, as to fill us with dismay and terror; and then, if religion does not present us with the consolations of the Gospel, it is no great matter of astonishment if we sink into absolute despair. But the Gospel is full of hope and comfort; and, when cordially believed, is capable of affording relief in cases the most desperate. It is unbelief, Sir, and not faith, which drives people to despair.

MR. KEEN. But it is evident that religion is the cause of their insanity, because these people, before their derangement is complete, are always engaged in religious exercises—praying, reading, or hearing sermons.

MR. GREY. One reason of this may be, that they ignorantly suppose their salvation depends on the multitude of religious duties,

whereby they expect to merit the favour of their Maker, and discovering the imperfection of these services, they sink into despondency. At other times they take up some particular point of religion—as for instance, the divine decrees—and, attempting to penetrate where angels dare not, they become overwhelmed with the thought that perhaps those decrees may be against them, and this seals them down to melancholy and despair ; they suppose themselves doomed to irretrievable misery, when Heaven is open to all the human race besides.

Here the dispute closed, Mr. Keen being sent for by a patient. After he was gone, Mr. Grey observed to Dr. Scott, I am sorry to find your protégé, Mr. Keen, so strongly tinctured with infidelity.

DR. SCOTT. I have often reasoned with him on the subject ; but there is an infatuation attending these principles, which will not allow men to submit, however their objections may be silenced.

MR. GREY. This, Sir, I call the madness of infidelity.

DR. SCOTT. I have frequently repeated to him the reproof of Sir Isaac Newton to Dr. Halley—"When you talk on science, I listen to you with pleasure, because you understand it; but when you talk of religion, it is too plain that you understand nothing about it."

MR. GREY. Yet I conceive, Sir, infidelity is rather a disease of the heart than of the head. Men of the clearest intellects, from a rooted aversion to religion, resist its sacred obligations; and, like the deaf adder, will not be charmed, "though the charmer charm ever so wisely."

DR. SCOTT. So I think, Sir; for, in cases where every objection has been answered, and persons have acknowledged themselves satisfied of the truth of Christianity, they have still discovered an aversion to its sacred mysteries, and its holy precepts.

MR. GREY. It is one thing to acquiesce, either from the force of education or of argument, in the truth of religion, and quite another cordially to believe it.

DR. SCOTT. True, Sir; our divines have

therefore distinguished different kinds of faith—as nominal and real, common and saving, and so forth.

MR. GREY. Divines have been too fond of these distinctions, and sometimes made them without sufficient reason. Much depends, I apprehend, on the manner in which we view the gospel, as proposed to our acceptance.

DR. SCOTT. Will you have the goodness to explain, Sir?

MR. GREY. Perhaps I had better do this by a familiar illustration. Suppose, Sir, a decision to have taken place in the Court of Chancery, and an advertisement to be inserted in the Gazette, that the Andover Estate, describing it, is adjudged to John Anderson and his heirs for ever. Now, Sir, the multitude will read this with the utmost indifference—for what is it to them? A few will say, ‘I am glad of it, for Mr. Anderson is a worthy man;’ one perhaps may say, ‘I am sorry, for I hate the man.’ But John Anderson and his heirs will read the decree with very different feelings. All believe it;

but these only cordially embrace it, for it is theirs. So is it in the gospel. The generality of nominal Christians admit the truth of religion, without feeling any peculiar interest in it, or troubling themselves to make any enquiry. But when the gospel comes to be considered as a testament or decree in our favour, then we feel a peculiar interest, and cordially embrace it.

DR. SCOTT. Your illustration, Sir, seems just upon the whole ; yet we see persons, who evince nothing of the spirit of the gospel in their conduct, will contend violently, and sometimes ‘even unto blood,’ for the truth and excellency of their religion. Are we to suppose that they contend thus earnestly for what they really do not believe?

MR. GREY. Yes, Sir ; many people contend even for the pleasure of contention. It is the element of some people, and they are never happy in a calm. Others think to hide their indifference to vital religion by their zeal for creeds and forms. These are hypocrites, and the others Christians in name only.

DR. SCOTT. I observe, Sir, you distinguish between nominal Christians, merely such, and hypocrites; do we not generally consider all mere professors as hypocrites?

MR. GREY. Perhaps so: but I think not accurately. A hypocrite is an assumed character: he puts on the mask of religion to deceive: but a profane immoral professor (and there are many such) can deceive nobody; nor does he indeed attempt it. He carries the mark of the beast upon his forehead.

DR. SCOTT. There is another class of nominal Christians, whom I suppose you would except—such as know nothing of Christianity beside the name, and take no trouble to enquire into either its doctrines or its duties.

MR. GREY. I think these cannot properly be called hypocrites, because they profess to be no more than they really are—Christians in *name* only; and they use this name, not as a religious, but a civil term, to distinguish themselves from brutes and barbarians.

DR. SCOTT. But are not these very depraved and awful characters?

MR. GREY. Truly so: for they are practical Atheists, as being ‘without God in the world,’ though perhaps they never thought upon the subject.

DR. SCOTT. They have to answer, not only for rejecting Divine Revelation without enquiry, with all its evidences before them, but also for neglecting the light of nature, which not only teaches us that there is a God, but, as Cicero many ages since taught, that he is to be worshipped.

MR. GREY. Indeed, Sir, these are characters which call for our pity, and excite our zeal; but hypocrites are characters still more hateful to God, and far more criminal in his sight, because they assume religion as a disguise for their wickedness; and pretend to worship God merely to serve their own interests, or to procure the applause of men.

DR. SCOTT. Do you conceive, Sir, that hypocrites know their own character?

MR. GREY. If they know the ruling principle of their own conduct; and this I conceive, forms the characteristic difference between a hypocrite and a mere professor.

DR. SCOTT. What madness must it be, Sir, to attempt to deceive God!

MR. GREY. That would be more than madness, Sir; it would be idiotcy. No man who believes in a Supreme Being can be weak enough to think that he *can* deceive him. But hypocrites, strictly such, find it their interest to deceive mankind; and as to God, they say, 'Tush! God does not see'—that is, he will not regard it; or as your friend, Mr. Keen, would express it, 'he does not trouble himself to scrutinize the characters of private individuals.'

DR. SCOTT. But are not hypocrites often very zealous for God, and for religion?

MR. GREY. They may appear so, and say as Jehu did, 'Come, see my zeal for the Lord of Hosts!' But this was not intended to deceive God, but the people. If such men are mad, which I am very ready

to admit in a moral sense, theirs, as I remarked just now, is the madness of Infidelity.

DR. SCOTT. Perhaps you would illustrate this by the case of Saul, afterwards called Paul, who was “*exceedingly mad*” against the Christians.

MR. GREY. No, Sir; Saul was neither an infidel nor a hypocrite; he believed in Moses and the Jewish law; but he was mad enough to think he pleased God by persecuting his Saints, whom he took for hypocrites or enthusiasts. He was, however, perfectly sincere in his zeal, and would have suffered, perhaps, as well as done, any thing to extirpate the new sect of Christians.

DR. SCOTT. You think, then, that Saul the Pharisee would have suffered as readily for Judaism, as Paul the Apostle did for Christianity.

MR. GREY. I think his character was uniformly sincere and ardent; his heart was in every thing he did, through life.

DR. SCOTT. Then you excuse his persecuting spirit, since he acted from so pure a motive?

MR. GREY. God forbid, Sir, I should be the apologist of persecution ! Integrity and zeal are valuable qualities in the human character, but will not justify a bad cause, nor excuse a cruel action.

DR. SCOTT. Truly so : yet you seem to me to apologize for Saul's conduct, when you attribute it to zeal for God : but how can you reconcile his being a believer in the Jewish religion, when, after his conversion, speaking of his persecuting the saints, he says, he did it " ignorantly in unbelief."

MR. GREY. This I consider as perfectly consistent with my assertion, that Saul was not an Infidel, unless we are warranted in applying that name to every unconverted person, which would, I think, produce confusion in our ideas. Such may, indeed, be properly considered as *unbelievers* ; but I consider an Infidel as a *disbeliever*, which certainly implies something more, namely, a positive rejection of revealed religion.

DR. SCOTT. Your distinction seems judicious ; but how can an unbeliever have faith in the God of Israel ?

MR. GREY. Saul believed in Moses and the prophets, and the traditions of the fathers ; so far he was a believer in the Jewish religion, and consequently in the promise of a Messiah ; but he was too much *scandalized* (if I may use the term) at the humble appearance of Jesus of Nazareth, to suppose for a moment that he was the person, until it was revealed to him by the Spirit of God ; for “ no man calleth Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.”

DR. SCOTT. I suppose, Sir, that by calling Jesus LORD, you understand the owning him as such, and submitting to his authority.

MR. GREY. Certainly, Sir ; I consider it as a scriptural idiom for believing in him and obeying him.

DR. SCOTT. And you consider this, I should presume, as much a miraculous work of the Holy Spirit as was creation itself.

MR. GREY. My dear Sir, it is always with pain that I differ from you, knowing how well acquainted you are with subjects of this nature ; but I do not consider either crea-

tion or conversion as a work properly miraculous.

DR. SCOTT. No, Sir!

MR. GREY. By no means. Creation I consider as a formation of the grand machinery of nature in a world, or rather a system of worlds; but a miracle I conceive to be an occasional deviation from the usual course of that machinery, through the interference of

“The Hand unseen,
“Which turns and guides the great machine.”

But the conversion of a sinner has nothing to do with the course of nature, at least as we generally understand that phrase, and therefore can be no deviation from it.

DR. SCOTT. But do you not consider the conversion of Paul as miraculous?

MR. GREY. Only as respects the external circumstances which attended it—the light and the voice from heaven: but the effects of this work were regular, and in the usual way of the Holy Spirit's operations upon the heart.

DR. SCOTT. Does not the Apostle himself speak of the work of grace as a new creation and a resurrection?

MR. GREY. Yes ; and therefore not miraculous. I think I have shewn that creation is not so, and I conceive the same as to the general resurrection. Christ's resurrection was a miracle, because it was out of the usual course of nature ; but that can hardly be said of the resurrection of all mankind ; nor am I sure that this may not be effected by some secret law of nature, and as naturally as vegetation is restored by the return of Spring.

DR. SCOTT. But you do not, my dear Sir, mean to say, that the conversion of a sinner is an event which takes place in the regular course of nature.

MR. GREY. By no means : I think we confine the term *nature*, and its laws, to the *material* universe ; yet I doubt not that the intellectual universe, so to speak, has laws as general and as regular as those of matter.

DR. SCOTT. And you think conversion is the result of those laws ?

MR. GREY. I would speak with diffidence ; but I believe that the Divine Being exercises mercy and grace according to his

own good pleasure; but the work once begun, I conceive that it proceeds with the same regularity as all the other works of God. The animal, you know, is involved in the embryo—

DR. SCOTT. And as the parts gradually unfold, so in the new man you consider every grace as gradually unfolding, till “the perfect man in Christ” appears.

Here the conversation was interrupted by the introduction of a grave and aged couple. Mr. and Mrs. Sweet were announced as just arrived from the Cape, where they had resided several years as Missionaries of the United Brethren, but had returned to England for medical advice for Mrs. Sweet, and to recruit a little Mr. S.’s shattered constitution.

Mr. Grey, as he afterwards mentioned, was highly gratified with the opportunity of making some enquiries respecting the state of foreign parts, and the Moravian missions; accordingly, when tea and coffee were brought in, and it soon was, while the lady of the house engaged the attention of Mrs. S. Mr. Grey and Dr. Scott entered into conversation with the missionary.

MR. GREY. How long have you been abroad, Sir?

MR. SWEET. Sir, I have served my dear Lord and Master, with much weakness, for more than thirty years.

MR. GREY. In what parts have you chiefly resided?

MR. SWEET. For three years I was in Greenland, but my poor constitution would not bear the severity of that climate. Then I resided seven or eight years on the coast of Labrador. After this I travelled, and visited most of the Brethren's stations in North America; but for the last twelve years I have resided at Gnadenthal, near the Cape.

DR. SCOTT. Ah! did you ever meet with an old acquaintance of mine there, a Dutch physician of the name of Vanderkemp?

MR. SWEET. Yes, Sir; twice or thrice I have seen him; but just before I sailed for England, I heard that our Saviour had taken him home.

MR. GREY. Is he dead then?

MR. SWEET. He sleeps in Jesus; and our brethren, who dearly loved him, were as much grieved for the loss as if he had been

one of our own society; but when we considered his age and infirmities, and the new scene of trials in which he was about to engage, we thanked our dear Saviour, who had taken him to himself, and we sung—
“Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord: for they rest from their labours, and their works follow them.”

DR. SCOTT. What then? had the dear Doctor planned new schemes of benevolence?

MR. SWEET. It was his ambition, like Saint Paul, to be always extending the knowledge of our Saviour into new countries, and to preach the name of Jesus where it had been hitherto unknown. He had, therefore, planned a mission to Madagascar, and was upon the point of engaging in it, when our Master said, “It is enough;” and put an end to his labours and his sufferings.

DR. SCOTT. Dear man! I knew him in Holland before his conversion; he was always of an ardent mind, and never thought he had done, while any thing remained yet to do.

MR. SWEET. And when he became a missionary, his energies encreased with the dignity of the cause in which he engaged. He sought nothing for himself, but he sighed for new worlds to conquer for his Redeemer.

MR. GREY. A true missionary spirit that !

DR. SCOTT. But did you hear any particulars of his death ?

MR. SWEET. I heard that he died happily ; but that the nature of his disorder, which I think was paralytic, precluded him from much conversation.

MR. GREY. Good man ! he has entered into his rest ; and you, no doubt, are looking toward yours.

MR. SWEET. It is our duty to wait our dear Saviour's will : to be always ready when he calls, but not impatient to be gone. As to myself, though my constitution is much impaired, if it please the Lord to appoint me new labours, I hope I shall not shrink from them.

MR. GREY. Well, Sir, in the course of your travels you have had the opportunity

of viewing human nature in what our philosophers call its unsophisticated state.

MR. SWEET. Yes ; and I found it all corruption and impurity.

MR. GREY. But did you not find the Heathen strangers to many of the vices of civilized society?

MR. SWEET. No, my dear Sir ; I found in them all the same corrupt passions as among ourselves ; and nothing wanting but that sense of shame which frequently prevents, or hides them from observation.

MR. GREY. How did you proceed with them ? Did you find them ready to embrace the doctrines of Christianity ?

MR. SWEET. When our brethren went first to Greenland, they began with the truths of natural religion, and argued on the being and providence of God.

MR. GREY. Which, I suppose, they readily admitted.

MR. SWEET. Yes, they could not gainsay it ; but it produced no effect upon their hearts, and very little reformation in their lives.

DR. SCOTT. How did you act then ?

MR. SWEET. One of our brethren seeing

this, said ‘ I will preach the dying love of our Saviour.’ He did so, and the effect was instantaneous, like a shock of electricity.

MR. GREY. But I should fear this effect was on their passions only, and would not be abiding.

MR. SWEET. In many instances, no doubt, that was the case; but not in all. When they heard that the Lamb of God had died for sinners, and for heathen sinners, some of them said—“ I will love the Lord Jesus who died for sinners ;” and when they began to love our Saviour, the love of sin soon left them.

MR. GREY. But, I suppose, your chief hopes would rest with the rising generation; at least, this seems to be the principle of some missionary societies.

MR. SWEET. There is certainly less of prejudice to overcome in children, and less of habit to subdue; yet, as respects the gospel, I have found the same natural aversion to its peculiar and sanctifying truths; and though the advantages they enjoy, in the comforts of civilization, may reconcile them to many restraints while young, I have

sometimes found that, when they grow up, their natural indolence and depravity, with the bad example of their heathen parents, has led them back again to the savage state.

MR. GREY. We must not, however, be “weary in well doing;” and I presume we have examples enough to encourage us in educating the children of the Heathen.

MR. SWEET. It is on that account that our brethren pay a particular attention to “the lambs of the flock;” and though we often fail in our object, we never are discouraged from proceeding. If but few are converted, God our Saviour hath taught us that the value of the soul is infinite, and therefore the conversion of one soul will reward much labour; besides which, many who are not converted to God are restrained from vice, and made useful members of society.

DR. SCOTT. Apropos! This conversation reminds me that we are to have a meeting to-morrow, to form a comprehensive school for the children of the poor.

MR. SWEET. At the suggestion of your clergyman, I suppose?

DR. SCOTT. No, indeed : he has talked of such a thing some time, but hesitates about its necessity ; and if adopted, wishes it to be confined to the children of his own church. At length some benevolent lay gentlemen have taken up the subject, and wish to form a school on the plan of universal education, and the rector, we hear, is coming to oppose it.

MR. GREY. Surely ! I should like to know what a clergyman can have to say against the education of children ? I hope you will not suffer him to go unanswered.

DR. SCOTT. Indeed he will not ; a shrewd Quaker in this neighbourhood, who supports the object, has promised to reply to the Doctor, and we have no doubt of his ability. Will you and your friend come ?

MR. GREY. I should much like it, that I may have a *new* view of " the insane world." What hour is the meeting ?

DR. SCOTT. At eleven, I suppose for twelve, as the fashion is.

MR. GREY. A foolish fashion ! but we will be in time, that we may secure comfortable seats.

Returning to our inn somewhat sooner than ordinary this evening we met with one of the same party as on the first night, Mr. Steadiman, a tradesman from the country, and, I believe, a draper. After some of those trite and familiar enquiries, always usual on meeting, and which are become the marks of civilization and good breeding, we adverted to our former topic, which introduced the following conversation between Mr. Steadiman and Mr. Grey :

MR. STEADIMAN. Strange and paradoxical as your assertion appeared to me the other night, Sir, I have been in a scene to-day which strongly reminded me of it, and made me a convert to your opinion, at least, so far as regards the class of persons among whom I have been.

MR. GREY. Where have you been, Sir?

MR. STEADIMAN. To Newgate, Sir.

MR. GREY. That is a scene to which I should not have thought of conducting my friend; you will therefore oblige us by relating the particular circumstances which led you to this change of sentiment.

MR. STEADIMAN. I heard that an old neighbour of mine, in the north, had been unfortunate, and was there confined; and I called to enquire if I could render him any service.

MR. GREY. A motive truly worthy of a Christian! But were you not much affected by the gloom and melancholy of the scene?

MR. STEADIMAN. At my first entrance I was; but as I proceeded I was shocked at the noise and ribaldry all around me. Your favourite maxim immediately occurred to me, and I said to myself, surely these people are mad!

MR. GREY. How did you find them occupied?

MR. STEADIMAN. The first party I observed, were disputing violently upon politics, over a tankard of porter: one extolling Bonaparte as the greatest man upon earth, and the other execrating him as the greatest villain.

MR. GREY. And how were the rest engaged?

MR. STEADIMAN. Another party was

playing at drafts, and a third at cards; one of the latter was cursing his stars for his ill luck, and at the same time abusing one of his companions for a cheat!

MR. GREY. And these men were in prison for debt.

MR. STEADIMAN. Chiefly so; but among them I perceived strangers, like myself, who, I suppose, treated their acquaintance, and endeavoured to divert them.

MR. GREY. Poor things! and this is the way they endeavour to administer consolation to the afflicted!

MR. STEADIMAN. Alas! Sir, few of them seemed to me to want consolation. They appeared to be some of the most jovial fellows I have seen this long time.

MR. GREY. And was your old neighbour amongst them?

MR. STEADIMAN. No, Sir; I am happy to say I found him much more rationally employed, in hearing one of his children read to him in the Testament, while his wife was busy with her needle.

MR. GREY. Much more rationally em-

ployed indeed! It is a pity men of that character should be confined.

MR. STEADIMAN. Truly so.—I always considered him as a worthy industrious man, but not very sharp in looking after his affairs; and so good natured as to be continually imposed upon.

MR. GREY. And that I suppose has subjected him to great losses.

MR. STEADIMAN. Yes, sir; but he tells me he is now confined on another man's account. He was surety for some person.

MR. GREY. Solomon says, "He that is surety for a stranger, shall smart for it;" but this man, I suppose, was surety for his *friend*.

MR. STEADIMAN. So he thought; but the man turned out bad.

MR. STEADIMAN. Alas, Sir! there are insane creditors as well as debtors; and because this man befriended the other, his creditor concludes him to be of the same bad principles. The creditor also appears to be of a vindictive character; and because the original debtor has contrived (as we some-

times say) to slip his neck out of the halter, he is determined to have his revenge on my unfortunate neighbour, and actually pays sixpence per day to detain him in confinement.

MR. GREY. Mad, indeed!—But did you not visit the felon side?

MR. STEADIMAN. Recollecting that a particular friend of mine had a son in London, who had been seduced by bad company to rob his master, I wished to enquire if he was in this prison, and here I found him, to my great surprize, diverting himself and his companions with a licentious song, which he had no sooner ended, than he was applauded with as much noise as in a theatre.

MR. GREY. Did he know you?

MR. STEADIMAN. No, Sir, nor I him at first, for he is much altered since I saw him in the country; and I found it hard to believe he could be so merry, when he was to be tried for his life in a few days.

MR. GREY. Moral insanity, Sir! this is the way sinners drive away care—

MR. STEADIMAN. And reason, too.

MR. GREY. Was he not much abashed when he found who you were?

MR. STEADIMAN. Not much, Sir. When I discovered myself, and could not help expressing some surprize to see him so merry in such circumstances, he replied—"We should be mop'd to death, Sir, if it were not for a little diversion of this kind."

MR. GREY. Did you see any under sentence of death?

MR. STEADIMAN. Yes, Sir; one, who was reading the Beggar's Opera, as I perceived; and another condemned for forgery, who seemed to live in great style, with a livery servant to attend him. He was sitting with two or three gentlemen (apparently so) over two bottles of wine, and seemed very cheerful. But I had no introduction to him, and only glanced at him as I passed by.

MR. GREY. Nothing is more conclusive as to the moral insanity of mankind, than the manner in which they usually employ their time.

MR. STEADIMAN. I was struck with the

same idea, when I lately visited a poor man in the sick ward of our parish workhouse.

MR. GREY. A scene somewhat similar : and how were they occupied ?

MR. STEADIMAN. In a manner almost as irrational, though not so noisy, nor so merry.

MR. GREY. The greater part, I suppose, were in a melancholy condition.

MR. STEADIMAN. Many were, Sir ; but others were gaily chatting upon trifles—some quarrelling and others swearing, either in jest or earnest. But the poor man I visited was much grieved and annoyed by their vain conversation. One dying man, I was told, got a boy to read to him Josephus's history of the Jewish wars ; another, who had a Prayer Book, got his nurse to read to him the Athanasian creed. There was a poor blind man in one corner, who was fond (as I was informed) of singing hymns, and a profane sailor, with one leg, who used to curse him, and set up a naval song generally at the same time.

MR. GREY. What a pity they had no

one to teach them better ; or at least, that such characters are not separated.

MR. STEADIMAN. Some time since, I was told there was a pious man, who used to visit and pray by them, and sometimes exhort ; but the clergyman of the parish heard of it and forbade it ; because, he said, he was a Methodist, and could not speak grammar.

MR. GREY. But did not the minister himself come and do the duty ?

MR. STEADIMAN. Yes, for a few weeks ; but he soon grew tired of it. He was, in short, too delicate to bear the smell of the room.

MR. GREY. Did not the poor people regret his leaving them ?

MR. STEADIMAN. Not greatly ; for they said they could not understand him.

MR. GREY. Did not he speak grammar, then ?

MR. STEADIMAN. O, yes ; they said he was too learned, and shot over their heads. The poor good man whom he sent away, they said, understood their cases and cir-

cumstances, and how to speak a “word in season” in their afflictions. But as to this gentleman, neither did they understand his discourses, nor he their complaints.

MR. GREY. How so?

MR. STEADIMAN. When any of them were under distress of mind, through convictions of sin, he started, and asked them, if they had committed robbery and murder; and when they assured him that was not the case, he told them they had nothing to fear, except being too religious, which would drive them melancholy.

MR. GREY. And thus they were soon weary of each other. But you do not mean to rank this clergyman as a member of our Insane World?

MR. STEADIMAN. I know nothing more like insanity than thus to trifle with dying men, on the borders of eternity.

MR. GREY. It is, indeed, a very lamentable thing, when clergymen undertake the “cure of souls,” without knowing the nature of their maladies, or being able to direct them to “the balm of Gilead”—or “the

good Physician," who alone can administer it with saving efficacy.

MR. STEADIMAN. It appears to me, Sir, that all the Greek and Latin in the world cannot compensate the lack of knowledge, so peculiarly necessary in the clerical profession. Is not the want of this a great defect in our establishment ?

MR. GREY. It is, certainly, a great defect—I had almost said, a great *crime*—in ministers to enter upon the clerical duty, without a solemn regard to their ordination vows.

Other company falling in, the conversation now dropped, and we soon after returned to our rooms till the next morning.

FOURTH DAY.

WE did not fail to be in time the next morning at Dr. Scott's, and he accompanied us to the appointed place of meeting. We were among the first who assembled, and the room rapidly filling, at twelve o'clock, Mr. *Martin*, a very respectable gentleman in the neighbourhood, was unanimously called to the chair, and briefly explained the object of the meeting. Another gentleman then rose to move, that a school should be formed, for the children of the poor, on the Lancastrian plan, under such regulations as might be approved, by a committee of gentlemen to be nominated by the present company.

This called up Dr. *Stiff*, the rector of the parish, who was understood to have come in

opposition to the object proposed. As my expectations were much excited, I took notes of his speech, and with the assistance of my friend, Mr. Grey, am able to give it, I believe, correctly, and pretty much at large.

“ Mr. Chairman,

“ Though I have no doubt of the good intention of the gentlemen who have called this meeting, I cannot but say, that I think it wholly unnecessary, and even dangerous to the peace and safety of our established church. First, Sir, it is *unnecessary*. Have we not a Charity school for the children of the most deserving poor? and for the others, have we not a Sunday school, to which almost all classes of children are admitted, and taught to read, and say their catechism? And if these are not enough, which I think they are, let us have a National school, and bring up the children, not as Heathens nor as Sec-taries, but as Christians and members of the established church. For my part, Sir, I view these innovations not only as unnecessary, but as *dangerous*; and here I must

beg the indulgence of the meeting, while I open to you a discovery, at which I am seriously alarmed ; and persuade myself I shall be able to convince all the gentlemen present, that I am not alarmed without sufficient reason.

“ It is not, Mr. Chairman, this society, or this class of societies only, which alarms me : I see societies arising all around us ; and if we admit this, it will not come alone. If we adopt a Lancastrian society, we must have a Bible society—a Bible society will produce a Tract society—a Tract society, a Missionary society. Then all the parent societies produce provincial and auxiliary societies, until at length we shall be filled with institutions, which threaten to impoverish the country, and undermine the church.”

“ Hear, hear !” was vociferated from several of the company, while the Doctor went on with his discovery.

“ Mr. Chairman, you, and several of the company present will probably recollect, that a few years since the Abbé Baruel and Mr.

Robison disclosed a scene, which filled us all with astonishment and terror. I refer to the conspiracy of the *Illuminati*, on the Continent, and which were making hasty strides to introduce their system here ; but, thank heaven, they were discovered, and by that means defeated. But I have to announce to you, Sir, a new society, or rather a confederation of various societies of *Illuminati*, far more alarming than the former ; in that the scheme is more extensive, and the number and activity of the agents greater.

“ The former *Illuminati* regarded chiefly the higher orders of society. Princes and statesmen, philosophers and the *literati*, were the converts at which they aimed ; and if they paid any regard to the mass of mankind, it was merely to employ them as the tools of their ambition. But these men meddle not with kings, and despise philosophers. Their object is the illumination of the people—and not the people of this country, or of Europe only, but of all the nations of the earth ; nor can a theatre less than the world suffice for the scene of their ambition.

“ I have said, this is not a *single* society, but a combination of societies, which, without any avowed connection, are affiliated to assist the operations of each other. One society gives a Bible—but the person who receives it, peradventure, cannot read ; another society, therefore, opens a school and teaches him. Still, perhaps, he cannot understand what he reads ; a third society, therefore, offers him an itinerant teacher, or a missionary, to explain this Bible ; and if this will not do, a fifth society presents him with a bundle of religious tracts. Thus they play into each other’s hands, and provide between them, every thing they judge necessary to promote their purpose.

“ The activity of the individuals is no less great and unexampled ; and though they may have but few men of wealth or power among them, so much the worse ; the want of these will be made up by numbers in the lower classes, who have not the same ties to the existing state of things, nor the same objections to innovation ; in short, a heterogeneous mass of sectaries, Anabaptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Quakers.

“ But what have we to fear ? will some benevolent and unexperienced persons say, ‘ What have we to fear from the spread of knowledge, and the illumination of mankind ? ’ To this, I beg leave to answer, that I am no enemy to prudent, discreet, and limited instruction, even of the lowest class ; but this wild scheme of indiscriminate illumination and universal learning, is big with innumerable mischiefs. I shall confine myself at present to one point of view : others will naturally present themselves to reflecting persons.

“ This system of universal instruction is then a *levelling* system, and tends to destroy that spirit of subordination, which is necessary to regular governments. It is a favourite maxim with these people, that “ knowledge is power ”—the diffusion of knowledge is, therefore, the diffusion of power, which, instead of being concentrated in one person, as in a monarchy, is distributed among all, which is the very essence of republicanism. To glance only at particulars, servants will become wiser than their masters—hearers than their pastors ; and instead of going

to their parish church to learn their duties, husbandmen and mechanics will be ready to cavil at every thing which they hear from their authorized teachers, unless they can bring chapter and verse to prove it, which you know is not always possible."

Considerable murmurings had been excited by some parts of this speech, and threatened an interruption; but the last sentence excited the risible powers of some persons present, and, I am sorry to say, produced a laugh against the clergyman, while others called loudly on him to give proof of his assertions; however, on the Chairman requiring order, silence was restored, and the Doctor proceeded with his speech.

"To shew you, Mr. Chairman, that I am not arguing at random, and that this is but one of the alarming consequences to be dreaded from such associations, I will enter a little into the constitution and design of some of the societies, which I have denounced to you as dangerous and alarming.

"To begin with the BIBLE Society—by

this, I do not mean, Sir, that venerable institution, called ‘The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge,’ in Bartlett’s Buildings, whose zeal, I am persuaded, will never outstep the bounds of prudence; but a new one, which has assumed the pompous name of “*The British and Foreign Bible Society*,” one of whose secretaries, I am very credibly informed, is a foreign Lutheran, and another a Calvinistic Anabaptist.

“This society, Sir, proposes to fill the world with Bibles; and their fundamental principle is, that every individual, or at least every family, should possess one. It will not satisfy them to object, that thousands cannot read—“We will have schools, say they, to teach them.” If you urge there are scores of languages into which the Bible has never been translated—they reply, “We will procure translations into every language upon earth.” And, in truth, by the progress they have already made, they seem to be in good earnest. But have these zealots calculated the enormous expence of this extravagant scheme? Are they able to pay

for all these translations?—to print all these versions?—and to distribute hundreds of millions of Bibles throughout the world? No, Sir; but they calculate upon the liberality of the public; and they mean to levy contributions on us more severe than those of any legitimate government. And those contributions are levied in such a variety of forms, and by such a multiplicity of means, as to create a just alarm: not only the rich, and those in the middling classes are called upon, but they will not spare the poor man's penny: and even the vails of servants, and the children's gingerbread* are placed in requisition. Now a great part of this money is to be expended in distant and in foreign countries—even among enemies and barbarians, whom these fanatics have a wonderful fancy for converting. And what I say of the Bible Society is not peculiar to that only, but applies to the Missionary Society, the Tract Society, and many others; and I do consider it as a matter worthy the serious enquiry of government, whether the

* Alluding to the Juvenile Societies.

scarcity of specie among us be not, in a great measure, owing to the vast sums sent out of the country under these pretences.”*

Here was an interruption of hissing and displeasure, too common at public meetings, which the Chairman hastened to terminate as soon as possible; and at the same time took the opportunity to inform the reverend gentleman, he considered him to be out of order, as the meeting was not called to form a Bible society, but a *school*. The divine proceeded—

“I am sensible, Sir, that some of my remarks may be thought irrelevant, but the point I am labouring to establish, is of the utmost importance; it is to shew that the various societies I have named are linked together—that they have one plan, and that plan highly injurious to the country, and especially to the established church.

“Bear with me, Sir, but a few minutes longer, and I will bring home the subject to the present occasion, and to every man’s

* This speech was delivered, it must be remarked, before the Bank began to resume its cash payments.

bosom. I was going to mention another society, nearly a-kin to the British and Foreign Bible Society—I mean, Sir, “The Naval and Military Bible Society,” whose object is to furnish Bibles to all our sailors and soldiers; and this, Sir, may be thought a most unexceptionable design: but it ought to be known, Sir, that this was a favourite scheme with Oliver Cromwell and the fanatics of the commonwealth. And is not this a most suspicious circumstance? Every soldier had a Bible, and what was the consequence? Every one thought himself able to understand and expound it—the regular teachers were neglected and despised, and soldiers and mechanics began to preach, and preached down the church. And this, Sir, depend upon it, will be the case again, if these schemes continue to be encouraged.

“Consider, Sir, the avowed object of these societies, and the close connection there is between them to promote that object. Their object is to teach mankind—and to teach them what? to read the Scriptures, and the Scriptures *only*. They do not join the

Prayer-book with them, which is the natural guardian of the Bible, and might preserve men from the wild notions of Sectaries. No; they are to read the Bible, and to interpret it for themselves—but they are to read the Bible *only*; and herein is supposed to consist the unexceptionable nature of the plan. But this, Sir, is a delusion. You teach the youth to read, and they will read what they please—you teach them to write, and they will write, perhaps, against church and state. Nor is this all: you teach them to read the Scriptures only, and the Bible Society will give only the Scriptures; but there is another society, called ‘The Religious Tract Society,’ and this will distribute among them sectarian tracts. There is an ‘Itinerant Society,’ that will provide them with lay preachers of their own class: and thus will they become completely weaned from the church, which has borne and nourished them. Nor is the evil confined at home: it will be extended to other establishments, and to other nations. Your Bible Society sends them Bibles only, but

your Tract Society will furnish them with tracts also, translated into all languages; and the Missionary Society will send them teachers according to their own heart. And thus, Sir, you see there is a connection and harmony in these designs.

“Nor is this all—a great part of these societies consist of the same individuals, and must, therefore, have the same design. Two of the secretaries of the Bible Society are secretaries of the Tract Society; one of these, and several of the members, are directors of the London Missionary Society. The chief supporters of these schools are known also to be members of the other societies—and I now see several members of the Bible Society present to support this school. Thus, Sir, I hope I have demonstrated what I proposed; that these societies have all one grand design, and that *that* design is inimical to the ecclesiastical establishment, and consequently to the state, which cannot long subsist without the church. In short, Sir, that the various societies which I have named, form a grand conspiracy both against church and state—

may, against all ecclesiastical establishments—all regular governments.”

Here occurred another interruption, from the injudicious zeal of some friend of universal education, which was, however, soon suppressed by the prudent interference of the Chairman, and Dr. Stiff once more proceeded :

“ I say, Mr. Chairman, to the state also this scheme is dangerous ; not only by the injury it offers to the church, but even more directly. To teach the body of the people, is as dangerous as to arm them *en masse* ; you put arms in their hands, and know not how they may employ them. So as to reading, when they are all taught (for you teach old as well as young,—when they are all taught) to read, they may not only read what you give them, but also democratic newspapers, seditious pamphlets, methodistical tracts, and other noxious publications.

“ Prudence, therefore, is requisite even in our acts of benevolence. It may be desirable to teach the children of the poor,

but their instruction should be limited. I am glad, therefore, that this work has been taken up by the clergy, and to them it should be confided, as it may, with safety to the state, since they are too deeply interested in the present constitution of things, to encourage any plans of innovation. If the Secretaries are allowed to teach their own children, it is all that they can reasonably desire; for if they are permitted to teach ours (I mean the children of the establishment) they will certainly draw them to their conventicles, and in the end, make them Sectaries like themselves. And I beg leave to add, there is this peculiar evil in the Lancastrian system—that it forms not only scholars, but *teachers*, who will multiply themselves, *ad infinitum*, at least, till they fill all our schools, and undermine the constitution; for children brought up in these schools, will never reverence their legal and established clergy.

“ Upon the whole, therefore, Mr. Chairman, I freely confess that I do not see the necessity of a new charity school in this

neighbourhood. But as gentlemen present, I suppose, came with a determination to give away their money, of which they seem to have a superabundance, I would recommend, by way of amendment, the formation of a national school, in connection with the national church, which, instead of undermining, will strengthen the hands of our establishment, both in church and state.”

Our clergyman had no sooner sat down, than several persons were ready to reply; but Mr. Abraham Worthy, the Quaker gentleman before mentioned, not only caught the eye of the Chairman, but of many of the company, who knowing his talents, and respecting his character, by universal consent called upon him to proceed, which he did as follows:—

“In addressing thee, friend Chairman, I must begin with expressing my satisfaction with thy conduct, in procuring a patient hearing for thy minister; because, on an occasion like this, when every man is called upon to lend a helping hand, every man

should be permitted to give his opinion and advice ; and advice may be, sometimes, more useful than assistance. I am glad, too, that thy respected friend was suffered to proceed, because he has now developed his whole design, and has shewn that he is equally averse to the instruction of men as of children ; and has avowed his attachment to the old prejudice, that knowledge is dangerous, and that it is necessary to keep mankind in ignorance, in order to keep them in subordination.

“ It must be confessed that this principle has high antiquity to boast. The Papists considered ignorance as the Mother of devotion ; and, therefore, opposed the Reformation with the same zeal, and I might add, with the same arguments, which are now adopted by our learned friend.

“ He has told us, there is a grand conspiracy to enlighten mankind ; and I am glad to hear this : for I have read of many conspiracies to keep them in ignorance and in bondage :—but I will endeavour to follow our friend through all his objections, to re-

lieve him from his alarms, and to quiet his apprehensions.

“ He begins with the *Illuminati* on the continent; and though I think that story has been much exaggerated, I admit that it had some foundation. I believe that from the days of Herod and Pontius Pilate to the present day, tyrant princes and infidel philosophers have been confederated together against the Lord and against his Christ; but these are not the only parties in the league—worldly churchmen, deeply interested, as he acknowledges, in the ignorance of mankind, have joined in the conspiracy; and while they gloried in their own supposed knowledge, have had little desire for the instruction of others. I must do thy minister the justice to say, that he has distinguished those whom he calls the *New Illuminati*, in so clear a manner from the former, at setting out, that all his subsequent attempts are not able to confound them. Indeed, he has placed them in contrast; and that very justly. The infidel *Illuminati*, he tells us, spent all their strength on the higher orders

—they cared not for the people; but these, at whom he is so displeased, extend their endeavours to the poorest and meanest of mankind. The design of the former was to propagate the atheistical philosophy; the object of the latter, to teach Bible Christianity;—the former attempted to crush the Saviour of mankind; the latter, to exalt him above every name in earth or heaven. This then is the argument of our learned friend—because the principles of Atheism disturb the foundations of social happiness, and introduce anarchy and crime, *therefore* the diffusion of the Christian religion, which teaches “every man to do his duty,” must have the same effect!!

“But this friend brings forward, not a combination of individuals, but of societies. Let us attend carefully to the description he gives of them, and then judge of the evils they are likely to produce.—1st, The British and Foreign Bible Society, whose sole object it is to circulate the scriptures. I confess that I feel a strong predilection for this society, and glory in being a member of it. Other societies of a similar

nature exclude us, by giving books which we cannot cordially approve; but our people greatly rejoiced when this institution was founded, because it interfered with none of our principles, or (if you please) prejudices against human forms. But this friend would not give the Bible without the Prayer Book, lest it should make sectaries and dissenters. Does not this seem to intimate, that his creed is not derived from the Bible, but from the Common Prayer-book; or, in short, that the Scriptures are not to be understood without the notes and comments of his church? which is exactly the plea of the Romish Clergy, and would carry us back again to the Pope and the church of Rome.

But this is not the only society he denounces—he adds (2.) ‘The Religious Tract Society.’ Now, though I am not a member of this institution, I have some knowledge of their publications, and approve, in general, what I have seen of them; but is not our friend’s favourite society a Tract society? What, then, are we to understand, that none but the members of his church are qualified

to print and distribute tracts?—or is it, that the new society publish at so much lower prices, that he is afraid knowledge may be too widely circulated? This, indeed, he has acknowledged; he is afraid that hearers may grow wiser than their teachers, which, as to some of them, may not be very difficult; and that they will no longer be led by the dictates of their ministers.

(3.) “ But this friend’s grand objection seems to lie against indiscriminate instruction of the poor, and particularly of the children of the Sectaries, as he calls them. It is clear he does not attribute our dissent to ignorance, or he would wish us to be instructed; but his fear seems to be, lest children should be taught the Scriptures without the Prayer Book and Catechism.

“ He is alarmed also at sending missionaries abroad. Now though we have no concern in this work, yet as friends to the civilization and instruction of the heathen, we are so far glad to hear of their success: and I know not why thy minister should feel jealousy or alarm; for there are no tythes

nor benefices, either at Otaheite or the Cape.

“ But this friend is fearful that the Secretaries, by their wild schemes of benevolence, will impoverish the country. What, then, have they got the keys of the Treasury, or the Exchequer, in their hands? Can they impose taxes on the nation to support their plans? Ah, no! but they can refrain from the theatres and other public amusements—they attend no races—no gaming tables—no convivial meetings; and those who know what immense sums are wasted on these criminal indulgences, can best calculate what good may be effected by individuals of property and fortune, who devote all their savings to this cause, and divert all the surplus of their income into these channels.

“ To return home to our subject, I justify the importance of instruction to the mass of mankind, particularly in these countries, on three grounds—

“ 1. It is necessary to their employments in society. How unpleasant it is to have

even menial servants that can neither write nor read ! How difficult to make them understand their errors ! What perpetual blunders and mistakes they make ! And if, by dint of industry and good behaviour, they rise in life, how painful is it to see a man of property, or of business, who can neither read nor write ! who is obliged to trust to others, to read his letters or his orders—who can sign a lease, or a contract, or a receipt, only with his mark !

“ 2. It is necessary to their fulfilment of the social duties. If we examine the records of crime, how few do we find there who have received a decent education—can write, or even read ! The Ordinary of Newgate himself does not scruple to attribute the frequency and multiplicity of crimes, to the want of “ early instruction in reading,” and to “ ignorance of religion.”

“ But our object is to teach men their duty, and to teach them, not from fine-spun philosophical theories, nor from human formularies, but from the Bible—to teach children their duties to their parents, servants

to their masters, and all relations and classes of life their mutual duties to each other; and does not experience shew the importance of this? Are not children who have had no education generally the most disobedient, untractable, and disorderly? And are not others, who are remarked for their obedience and kindness to their parents, generally such as have been brought up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?"

"Lastly, it is necessary, to teach them the means of salvation, and their duty to God their Maker. How wild, how gross, and how superstitious are the notions of uneducated people! Some know not if they have souls, or if there be an hereafter; some expect to be saved by the weakest superstition; and others by their own merits, who scarcely ever did a good action in their lives!

"And is it of no importance to be taught our duty to our Creator? Will not those who fear God make the best subjects, the best citizens, and the best servants? Whereas it is generally seen, that those who "fear

not God," neither do they "regard man." What hold can society have upon an Atheist, or a Sceptic, who believes not in an hereafter? Or what regard is due to his oath, who believes not in a future judgment? *These* are the principles, (those of scepticism and infidelity, I mean,) these are the principles which endanger the prosperity, and even the being of a nation.

"But our clerical friend is in fear lest we should teach the children our sectarian principles, and make them dissenters. Yet we teach them nothing but the Bible, and the moral duties drawn therefrom. He is alarmed lest soldiers and sailors should preach republicanism, as in the days of Oliver Cromwell. But surely he does not mean to insinuate that the Bible teaches republicanism? It was not the Bible, but the oppression of the house of Stuart, which made our countrymen republicans.

"It is very kind of thy minister certainly, to allow us to teach our own children. There was a time, in the latter end of the reign of Queen Ann, when we, as dissenters,

were threatened to be deprived of this privilege—we therefore enjoy it with gratitude ; but he is afraid of our teaching the children of *his* church. It is true that we do not refuse any who desire to be taught ; and if we prefer any, it is those who have the most need of teaching—those who are the most ignorant—the most vicious—the most profane. Now if he will have it that these belong to his church, (and we know they do not belong to us,) let *him* teach them—we only wish them to be taught, and we will seek farther for our scholars.

“ But there is one point to which I must again advert, because it is a most injurious slander. I know it does not originate with our learned friend, but I think he has adopted it without due consideration ; or, if not, let him produce his proofs. He is afraid that if children are taught to read by us, they may be taught at the same time seditious or sectarian principles. Now, as to our society, I appeal to thee, friend Martin, and to all this company, if we are not the last sect that can be charged with the zeal

of proselytism ; and as to sedition, when was any one of our friends accused of it? Of other sects I cannot speak so confidently; but I believe that very few of those who engage in religious and benevolent societies, meddle much in political confederations ; indeed, I can appeal to our respected friend himself, whether, if he were in search of seditious publications, he would go to the depositories of these societies, or not rather to those pests of literature and religion, where the blasphemies of Voltaire and Paine are retailed, and circulated among the lower classes of society.

“ But thy friend professes to be alarmed at the *expence* of these institutions, and cannot forbear from sneering at the benevolent principles from which they have emanated. He seems to be afraid, lest the money of the nation should be spent in enlightening and reforming mankind, instead of destroying them—in books of instruction, instead of instruments of warfare. But in the close of his speech, he has introduced a proposal, for which, in the present case, I

am at a loss to find any honourable motive. Does he wish to divide the company, by proposing an object to which our society (of which there are several members present,) cannot possibly agree? If thy minister wished to form a national school for the children of his own church, he might have called a meeting, and we certainly should not have interfered. But he plainly tells us that he thinks it quite unnecessary, and proposes it merely from opposition to our plan of "a school for all."

"But thy worthy friend insinuates, that our plans are mixed with disaffection to the state, and threaten to overthrow the constitution. On this point we are able not only to appeal to facts, but to the highest authorities. The house of Brunswick has always been favourable to dissenters, and especially to our society; more particularly our venerable and afflicted Sovereign, who, so far from being jealous of these benevolent designs, was one of the first to patronize them, in which he has been followed by several of his royal Sons; and it

is well known that he expressed a pious wish, in the fulfilment of which we should all exceedingly rejoice, that he might “live to see the day, in which every poor child in his kingdom might be able to read the Bible.”

I have not interrupted friend Worthy's speech, to notice the approbation which accompanied almost every sentence; but the last produced a momentary silence: and many tears of loyal sympathy were wiped, before the thunder of applause could testify the general coincidence of sentiment, which prevailed. Dr. Stiff, therefore, very prudently retired; leaving a few of his more liberal brethren to assist the lay gentlemen in forming the outlines of the institution, and in choosing a Committee, by whose wisdom and diligence it might be matured. Several other speeches were made in favour of the object, by different gentlemen, and one by the vicar of an adjoining parish, who was anxious to have it understood, that the established clergy were not all of the same

narrow way of thinking with Dr. Stiff; but however they might prefer the forms of their own establishment, yet thought it their duty to encourage and assist every plan for promoting the instruction of the poor, and improving the condition of the lower orders.

The business over, my friend Mr. Grey and myself returned, by appointment, to the house of Dr. Scott, and partook of another family dinner. About an hour after which, Mr. Keen dropped in, as he frequently did, to see the Doctor, whom he esteemed as a friend, and regarded as a patron in his profession, though he differed so widely from him in religion. It may naturally be supposed that the morning meeting was reverted to after dinner, and was actually under discussion when Mr. Keen came in, and was apparently surprised to find us there again so soon. The Doctor, however, informed him of the circumstance that now brought us there, adding that we had heard a long speech from a clergyman, who opposed the children of the poor being generally taught to read the Bible.

“ A Clergyman oppose children being taught to read the Bible !” said Mr. K. “ why surely the man is mad ! Is it not his business to read the Bible, and to teach others to do the same ?” I could not help smiling, that Mr. K. should at once rank Dr. Stiff among the patients of “ the insane world ;” and frankly told our young anatomist, I was surprised to find him an advocate for reading the Bible. “ You mistake me, Sir,” said he, “ I am no friend to reading the Bible ; because, to speak honestly, I do not believe it ; but I have no patience with men hired, and so well paid too, to teach and defend Christianity, who betray the cause and desert their duty : and depend upon it,” said he, “ with considerable warmth, they are worse infidels at heart than I am ; for, did I believe it, I would defend it like a man—as pertinaciously as my old friend Dr. Scott here.”

DR. SCOTT. But, Mr. Keen, you have taken up the matter rather hastily : the gentleman said nothing against the Bible ; he was only afraid learning should become too

cheap, or knowledge too general ; and that we should become “ righteous overmuch.”

MR. KEEN. Yes, Sir ; I know the *l'esprit de corps* ; they are afraid we laymen should be too deep for them, and find out their hypocrisy !

MR. GREY. But, Mr. Keen, you are too vehement ; this is not language for gentlemen of one profession to use toward another.

MR. KEEN. I beg your pardon, Sir ; but I know the principles of these men ; they are afraid the world should grow wise enough to do without them, and then they would lose their livings.

DR. SCOTT. You should have heard, Sir, how coolly and judiciously our friend Worthy took up the subject, and answered the clergyman without the least violence or passion.

MR. KEEN. I dare say ; for I know the Quakers are both long-headed and cool-headed ; but if I were a Christian, I think I should be a Methodist rather than a Quaker ; for whatever opinion I adopt, I always defend it with all my might ; and I was

sorry business called me away yesterday, in the middle of our argument ; and no doubt you carried it all your own way when I was gone.

DR. SCOTT. Certainly, Sir ; we did not oppose each other for opposition sake, like boys at a college exercise.

MR. GREY. But permit me, Sir, to say, I cannot reconcile your sentiments yesterday with those you have just now avowed : then you said, ‘ Religion drives people mad ; ’ now you say, if you were a convert to Christianity, you also would be a Methodist—What, Sir, would you be one of these mad people ?

MR. KEEN. Indeed, I think I should ; your doctrine of a future state and an eternal hell, did I believe it, would certainly drive me out of my senses.

DR. SCOTT. I should rather hope, Sir, it might drive you out of your sins.

MR. GREY. I fear not, Sir ; I think your friend has hit the mark by a random shot. Whenever a man is convinced of the consequences of vice, without being cured of the

- love of it, there is great danger of his sinking into despair: on the one hand he feels too strong an attachment to his sins to give them up; on the other, he looks into the infernal gulf, and cries, 'There is no remedy; I must be lost.' So Ephraim said, 'I have loved idols, and after idols will I go.'

MR. KEEN. What do you mean, gentlemen? are you going to arraign me at the bar of heaven? Or are you, in good earnest, trying to drive me mad?

MR. GREY. Sir, we neither mean to impeach your understanding, nor your morals; but as you avow yourself a disbeliever in Christianity, and yet acknowledge that if you did believe it, you would give yourself up to its influence, and be a Christian in good earnest—will you allow us to ask you a few questions on this subject?

MR. KEEN. Certainly, gentlemen; I am your humble Catechumen, and will answer you to the best of my abilities.

DR. SCOTT. We assume nothing; and only wish to converse with you in a friendly manner, as we might do, if we saw you

about to take any step ruinous to your health or circumstances.

MR. KEEN.—(to Dr. Scott.) Sir, I cannot doubt *your* kindness, and shall not question that of your friend, Mr. Grey.

MR. GREY. Then, Sir, permit me to ask, Do you not sometimes hesitate upon the truth of Revelation? Does not conscience sometimes make you tremble with the question—What, if after all, there should be a future state, and an eternal world?

MR. KEEN. Sir, I am as weak as other men; and when in a melancholy mood, old prejudices will haunt me, and superstition sometimes rises before me in all her forms of horror! But I run away from the old *hag*, and fly to business, or to company, or to the theatre.

MR. GREY. But are you quite certain that there is no foundation for these fears and surmises? Have you demonstrated that there is no hereafter?

MR. KEEN. Demonstrated, Sir! no wise man will attempt to demonstrate a mere ne-

gative. I ground my opinions on the established principles of reason and philosophy; but your notion of immaterial spirit is a chimæra, which has no more foundation in nature, or in fact, than the ghosts of our grandmothers.

MR. GREY. But though you believe not in ghosts, it seems you believe in witches; and, when conscience seizes, you fly to the world for refuge—but this will not be always possible.

MR. KEEN. I understand you, Sir; I suppose I must die; but I hope to die with fortitude. I shall parry the enemy as long as I can, you may depend upon it; but when Charon's boat arrives, and I must go, I hope to have courage to leap into it like a man. It is but a leap in the dark, you know.

DR. SCOTT. A dreadful leap, indeed, Sir—into an eternal world!

MR. KEEN. Here you beg the question, Doctor; you must prove to me the existence of an eternal world; for my part, I have no ideas but what I derive from my senses; and

these inform me of no world but that which I see and feel around me.

MR. GREY. This, Sir, I presume, you call the material world; but what are the properties of matter?

MR. KEEN. The properties of matter, you know, are extension and solidity, form and colour.

MR. GREY. And consciousness, or the power of thinking?

MR. KEEN. That, Sir, I do not consider as an essential quality of matter; but rather as the result of a certain organization of it.

MR. GREY. I am not unacquainted with the powers of mechanism, and I can trace their effects; but to adopt your mode of reasoning in this case, I have no idea how matter and motion can produce ratiocination. Did you ever see a reasoning machine?

MR. KEEN. Yes, Sir; every animal is such, and particularly man.

MR. GREY. Sir, you are smart upon me. I know that the human frame is a machine, and that the mind reasons; but I cannot

conceive, Sir, how reason can arise from machinery; can you explain this?

MR. KEEN. No, Sir, it is a mystery; and I must take refuge, as you do, in human ignorance.

MR. GREY. So, then, there are mysteries in infidelity! and you are obliged to believe more than your senses can demonstrate!

DR. SCOTT. But we cannot allow you, Mr. Keen, to fly to a refuge you will not allow to us. You will believe nothing but what your senses teach; do they teach you that thought is produced by machinery?

MR. KEEN. I find nothing in man but what is material; I therefore refer to matter, whatever effects I see.

MR. GREY. I find in man what is utterly foreign to the nature and properties of matter, and therefore conclude he must have a soul; and I think my inference is as sound as your's; for as you infer the existence of matter from its essential properties of solidity and extension; so do I the existence of spirit, from its essential properties of consciousness and reason.

MR. KEEN. But what should hinder, but that the great Creator may have added to matter the properties of thought or reasoning, as well as colour and form ?

MR. GREY. Why then, Sir, I should expect that all matter would have the power of reasoning, as well as the accidents of form and colour.

DR. SCOTT. O! Sir, I am glad to hear you talk of the Creator ; I was afraid you had renounced him.

MR. KEEN. By no means, Sir ; I consider the universe as an immense machine, and the Supreme Being as animating it ; of whom the poet says,

“ Whose body nature is, and God the soul.”

DR. SCOTT. This, Sir, this was “ a prophet of your own,” as the apostle says ; but I congratulate you on being come back again into the world of *souls*.

MR. GREY. But, pray, Sir, do you consider this great Being, whom you call “ the Soul of the world,” as spiritual or material ?

MR. KEEN. Truly, Sir ; your questions are embarrassing, and I don't like to speak

too confidently on these subjects. I think it most wise to keep my mind in a state of equilibrium—ready to turn either way, according to the weight of evidence, when I can find any.

MR. GREY. I perceive, Sir, you feel the difficulty of an answer, that shall not refute your own theory; for the shocking position of the materiality of Deity confounds him with the universe you are pleased to say he animates; and if you admit one infinite and eternal spirit, I know not how you can be certain there are no created spirits.

DR. SCOTT. For my part, I rest in the revelation of himself, which the great Creator has mercifully given me.

MR. KEEN. O! Sir, if you come to Revelation, I have done with you; I have long made up my mind to reject that.

DR. SCOTT. Unhappy man! to reject the only source of human comfort! And even of your own notions, and of the first principles of natural religion, you are still in doubt. How miserable is infidelity!

MR. KEEN. Not so miserable neither,

for you must take it into the account that, if we have none of your consolations, we have none of your terrors; and you must allow it is no small thing to get rid of the terrors of hell and damnation; besides, we have none of the trouble of “working out our salvation” with prayer and fasting, as you do.

DR. SCOTT. My dear friend, were the denial of hell an escape from it, I might congratulate you; but, alas! Sir, it is the way to plunge into it. And as for the trouble you speak of, the services of religion constitute the chief pleasure of our lives.

MR. GREY. I should have no objection, Sir, to rest our cause on its comparative advantages, particularly in times of trial, in sickness, and in death. You, Sir, have seen many Christians in the approach of death.

MR. KEEN. I have, Sir; and to speak the truth, I have sometimes been ready to envy them; yet I have considered them as under a delusion.

MR. GREY. Then, Sir, it is a sweet delusion; and permit me to say, it is attended

with no danger; for what can we lose by our religion, even if it should be a delusion?

MR. KEEN. All the pleasures of human life, Sir.

DR. SCOTT. Oh, no, Sir! we deny this; many of us have tasted of your pleasures, and can assure you, we feel no regret in exchanging them for what you consider as the painful services of religion: to say nothing of its pleasures and consolations.

MR. GREY. But suppose, Mr. Keen, that you should be mistaken; and that when you take your 'leap in the dark,' you should leap into the bottomless pit!

MR. KEEN. Prythee, Gentlemen, do not torment me before the time! I am too much attached to the present world to think of leaving it.

DR. SCOTT. But, my dear Sir, you know you have no lease of life; and is it not the part of a wise man to prepare for the worst? And how happy would it be when you come to die, to have a good hope, through grace, of entering into eternal life!

MR. KEEN. Well, Sir! but I cannot

give myself grace, you know, upon your own principles; so we may as well change the subject. Apropos! here come the tea-things—and we shall have the ladies now to talk with.

MR. GREY. My dear Sir, you confirm my opinion, that a sceptic cannot bear to think on these subjects.

MR. KEEN. Why, truly Sir, they are not very pleasant subjects for speculation, and therefore I wish to drop them.

DR. SCOTT. But tell me honestly, my friend, is there not something in religion which disgusts and offends you?

MR. KEEN. As to that, Doctor, you know I cannot like a religion that I do not believe; beside, I can never fancy the Deity so precise and strict as you Presbyterians represent him.

MR. GREY. Ah! Sir, now you have betrayed the secret! The gospel is too holy a system for you; it will not indulge your passions; it will not tolerate your favourite vices; you cannot love a system of perfect purity. The fault therefore, permit me to

say, lies not in the gospel, but in your own heart.

MR. KEEN. Well, be it so! when I get *old*, perhaps I may think as gravely on these subjects as yourselves. Here come the ladies.

DR. SCOTT. One word in your ear, my friend: remember, "*Now* is the accepted time!—*this* is the day of salvation!"

[*The ladies enter.*]

MR. KEEN. Ladies, your most obedient!

It is not the object of this work to relate the mere chit-chat of a tea-table; here therefore we draw the veil; remarking only, that though Mr. KEEN took no notice for the present of Dr. Scott's friendly hint, it was not forgotten; and though he affected a more than ordinary cheerfulness in conversation, it was evidently affected; and in the midst of his sallies of wit and gaiety, it seemed that some thought crossed his mind, that very much discomposed it. It was from the same uneasiness of mind that he was prompted to engage the Doctor's two nieces, who came on a visit, to unite with him to ask for *cards*.

DR. SCOTT. *Cards!* Mr. Keen; surely you never saw any article of the kind in my house; we never use them.

MR. KEEN. But I know your readiness to oblige the ladies; and you surely would not lecture them on morals and religion for their amusement.

DR. SCOTT. I am sorry any amusement should be wanting, when there is a man present of your taste and information.

MR. KEEN. But to confess the truth, I am rather out of tune, and I think a game at whist would bring me round again.

DR. SCOTT. You consider cards as a cure then, I suppose, for serious reflection; and that is the chief objection which I have against them.

MISS SCOTT. But I hope, Sir, there is no harm in an innocent game of cards.

DR. SCOTT. O! no, my dear, certainly not; but is there no harm in murder?

MISS SCOTT. Murder, Sir! I do not understand what you mean! What has a game of cards to do with murder? Do you suppose we are going to quarrel and fight?

DR. SCOTT. No, my dear; but I consider such amusements as murdering Time, one of our best friends; and as encouraging a sort of conversation that generally ends either in quarrelling between the parties present, or in slandering others.

MISS SALLY SCOTT. You have a very bad opinion of us, Sir, to think that we can't amuse ourselves a little without such excesses; I hope we are not quarrelsome, nor slanderous.

DR. SCOTT. Not at all, my dear; but I wish to keep my family out of temptation, and therefore admit of no gambling.

MISS SCOTT. Bless me, Sir! I hope you don't take us for gamblers; we only want a little relaxation.

DR. SCOTT. My dear girls, I acknowledge your amiable dispositions; and as to my friend Keen, he is as good a tempered lad as any I know; and from his close application to study and business, must often want relaxation.

MR. KEEN. Thank you, Sir; but then why debar me the pleasure of a little innocent diversion with the ladies?

DR. SCOTT. My dear fellow, I have no cards, nor have I ever allowed any in my house ; because, in the first place, I cannot encourage the waste of time ; secondly, I am a bitter enemy to every thing which has the appearance of gambling ; and finally, I hate the heathenish notions of luck and chance.

MR. KEEN. But, Sir, are there not many games which exercise the ingenuity, and indeed all the faculties ?

DR. SCOTT. Certainly : and this, as respects you, is perhaps the strongest of all objections. You want something, not to stretch, but to relax your mental powers.

MR. KEEN. But to unbend, is it not the best method, to bend the contrary way ?

DR. SCOTT. On that principle, a change of study is all that is required ; which I have been told to some men is quite sufficient ; and a game of algebra may do as well as a game at cards :—I have Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia* at hand.

MR. KEEN. You are very good, Sir ;

but my mind is not strong enough to be amused with the higher mathematics, though it might be, and often has been, by a game of cards. But pray, Sir, as you avow yourself a friend to relaxation, what amusements would you recommend?

DR. SCOTT. Many: such particularly as improve the mind while they relax the attention. Within doors, music, drawing, reading, and conversation; without doors, riding and walking, both which may be mingled with conversation and reading; and the latter with *botanizing*, and other branches of natural history.

MR. KEEN. But what would you recommend now?

DR. SCOTT. Take your choice.—With such talents as yours, and with ladies in company, a variety of topics must present themselves, which are amusing without being frivolous. Or, if you are not in tune for conversation, there is a fine old organ, by Father Smith, in the next room, and my nieces can both play.

Miss SCOTT. Not the church service,

uncle, and your organ, won't do for modern music.

DR. SCOTT. That is not the fault of my organ, but of your music; however there is also a harpsicord by Schroeter, which used formerly to be much admired, though it is now, like most good things, out of fashion.

MISS SALLY. A harpsicord! well! that to be sure is a curiosity; and it is a good while since I touched one. Let us try it, Mr. Keen.

DR. SCOTT. Aye! do so my girls, and you will find plenty of good old music, by Handel, Scarlatti, and Bach.

MR. KEEN. Well, ladies, then we will leave the old folks to philosophize, and treat ourselves with the amusements of the last century.

The young people having separated, the conversation was renewed by Mrs. Scott, the Doctor's lady.

MRS. SCOTT. I did not like, my dear, to interfere before the young people, but I confess I think you are rather too severe against cards. I remember I used to like a game at whist or loo when I was a girl;

and it has often relieved me from the headache or the vapours.

DR. SCOTT. Perhaps a pinch of medicinal snuff might have done as well ; if cards however were only taken medicinally, I should have little fear of their being used to excess, for people are not generally fond of taking medicine : and if they were prescribed by a physician, it might, perhaps, completely cure the evil ; for people would think it very hard to sit under the doctor's regimen for hours together. However, I certainly think that sufficient relaxation may be found in many things which tend to improvement rather than dissipation.

MR. GREY. That I take to be the true test of rational amusement : it must relax the mind without dissipating it. Now to relax the mind, it is not always necessary that it be unemployed ; a change of subject is often a great relief to studious men ; but our relaxations should not require intense meditations, nor should they be of that loose and frivolous nature as to exclude thought.

DR. SCOTT. Certainly not : for even the amusements of children require thought,

and may be often directed into a useful train of thinking ; but I really do not know what useful reflections the card table encourages.

MRS. SCOTT. As much, I should suppose, as drafts, or even the royal game of chess, in which you lords of the creation so much delight.

DR. SCOTT. I believe, my dear, you have not seen me play a game of chess these twenty years ; though, to be sure, it has been a favourite amusement among men eminent for sense and talent.

MRS. SCOTT. Yes : and among saints and martyrs too ; for I remember reading of it in John Fox's Martyrology.

MR. GREY. True, Madam ; and I believe the reason of its enjoying so distinguished honour is, that it was considered rather as an exercise of skill than a game of chance.

DR. SCOTT. No doubt, Sir ; and our ancestors probably took more pleasure in the exercise of deep reflection and abstract thought, than in those light and trifling

amusements which characterize the present age.

MRS. SCOTT. But I think, my dear, by what I have read of the ancient pastimes, that there were as many fools and triflers then as there are at present ; and there was something in their sports and pageantries even more ridiculous, and especially more cruel, than in the present age.

MR. GREY. Madam, human nature is the same in every age ; and a trifling spirit will always find trifling amusements : in respect of humanity, however, I think the age is certainly improved ; but in some other points of morals I fear it is rather worse ; and particularly in excessive gambling.

MRS. SCOTT. With regard to that, Sir, you know ladies are seldom chargeable with that crime to any considerable extent. Their winnings and losings are generally confined within their pin-money ; and besides that, are very often devoted to charitable purposes.

MR. GREY. I know, Madam, the popu-

lar interpretation of that text, that "Charity covers a multitude of sins," and I believe the ladies often screen themselves under that cloak: I fear, however, that card playing is not very charitable as respects its influence on characters.

MRS. SCOTT. I understand you, Sir; but I think you are wrong on *that* point at least. Characters, no doubt, often suffer at the card-table, but not more than at the tea-table; indeed when frivolous tattling women meet together, I believe, if their attention were not taken up by their cards, there would be a great deal more scandal circulated than there is.

MR. GREY. O Madam, I fear your sex will accuse you of slander, and prefer an indictment against you for libel.

DR. SCOTT. At least, my dear, I think they will not chuse you for an advocate. Do you mean to insinuate, that they cannot sit an hour without backbiting?

MRS. SCOTT. My dear, I don't mean to degrade my sex below their true character, nor to exalt yours. Perhaps yours fill up

the time with ribaldry and profaneness, that ours too often occupy in idle chit-chat; and if you think *that* a compliment to your wise and learned sex, you are welcome to it.

MR. GREY. Indeed, Madam, I did not know you were such a satirist: I must be more upon my guard.

MRS. SCOTT. I can distinguish worth and excellence in either sex, Sir, and am not blind to the failings of my own. I believe we have an equal share in the consequences of the fall, though they may shew themselves somewhat differently, according to our circumstances or dispositions.

MR. GREY. No doubt, Madam; but I think we are all agreed, that cards are not a Christian amusement.

MRS. SCOTT. Sir, I never heard of the amusements of Christianity. I think that any amusement can only be defended from the weakness of our nature. Had we wings like angels we might always soar; but we are like young birds that can fly but a little way at a time, and often drop upon the earth to rest.

MR. GREY. I believe, Madam, we had better drop the point than contend with you. I think the Doctor may safely allow *you* a pack of cards.

MRS. SCOTT. Indeed, Sir, I should rather burn them than use them. I am only pleading for young people, whose minds may not be furnished for a continued conversation.

DR. SCOTT. But then, my dear, do you not see that you thus prevent their minds from being furnished, by indulging their taste for frivolous amusement?

MRS. SCOTT. Well, my dear, I am willing to give up the point. I wish they might always be usefully and profitably employed; but I think it too much to be expected at their age: indeed, I find my own mind at times so *flag* that I am scarcely able to engage in any serious occupation, and it is often a matter of no small regret.

MR. GREY. I believe, Madam, we all feel the same at times; but it is our mercy we have to do with ONE who "remembers we are but dust;" and who does not expect "to reap where he has not sown."

DR. SCOTT. Perfection is not attainable in the present life, and it is useless to expect it.

MR. GREY. Yet it is our duty to aim at it. We are commanded to be "perfect, as our Father which is in heaven is perfect:" and it is only by aiming at perfection that we attain to excellence.

I think it unnecessary to pursue the conversation any farther. The young people soon after returned from their music—the party was broken up, and Mr. Grey and myself returned to our quarters, well pleased with the entertainment we had received, and particularly with the conversation of Dr. Scott and his pious lady.

As to Mr. Keen, when he went home, he did not immediately retire to bed, but for some time walked backwards and forwards in his room, with evident agitation; and his servants, who noticed the circumstance with some concern, overheard him repeatedly utter the words, "Now is the time," and "this is the day," in a sort of

soliloquy which they could by no means understand.

As to myself, on my return, I employed my time, in minuting, as usual, the adventures of the day; and as I had already enrolled Mr. Keen among the members of the Insane World, when I heard this I considered it as a symptom of returning reason.

FIFTH DAY.

I SHOULD have remarked, that on the preceding day, an appointment was made between the several parties to visit the BRITISH MUSEUM; and I cheerfully engaged to accompany them, as I had a great desire to visit this grand depository of national curiosities; not with a view of enlarging my knowledge of the Insane World, for I was already satisfied; but in the expectation of much instruction and rational amusement.

We were among the first company, and I could not help expressing some surprize, that an exhibition so rational, so scientific, and so *free*, was not more crowded.

You have hit upon the true cause, said Mr. Grey; it is not strange that the Insane World should set light by rational amuse-

ment; and the very circumstance of its being *free*, is a grand objection with fashionable people, who, though they are not particular in paying for the necessities of life, always estimate their *pleasures* by their *cost*. We are likewise too early for good company, who never rise till noon, and scarcely breakfast and dress time enough to come, before the exhibition closes. Beside, the works of nature and the mechanic arts are too vulgar for them, unless they travel a thousand miles to view them.

The first room we entered, contained a number of Egyptian relics, among which Mr. Grey pointed out a variety of patterns of mummies, which used probably to be shewn to the relations of the deceased, (like a tailor's pattern-book,) that they might choose, according to their taste or circumstances, a pattern which should give a form of elegance, and a shadow of immortality to their remains. "How do you account (said I) for this passion for immortality?" "No man (replied Mr. Grey) can think, with pleasure, on the extinction of his

being: even those who do not believe in a future state, cannot bear the reflection on their own principles. Death is, in all cases, awful, and will often make even a Christian tremble: but to be annihilated, strikes the mind with horror; so much so, that it has even been contended, that it were better to live in misery, than to be extinct.

“That is a principle I cannot subscribe to,” I replied; “yet the desire to live is certainly the last that leaves us, generally speaking; but the idea of living only in effigy is a poor species of immortality; one would wonder how they should be gratified with it.”

“Is it not the same with us? (said Mr. Grey) Do we not highly value the portraits of our deceased friends and ancestors? And do we not feel flattered with the idea of handing down our own portraits to posterity? Indeed were it not for this, the profession would be starved; for portrait painting is the only department which flourishes in the present day? And what, pray, (added my friend) what is there more substantial in the

love of fame? What is there more desirable, in being talked of after one is dead, than in being looked at?"

I was thinking—when we were led into the next room, where we saw two real mummies, brought from the catacombs of Sakkara, near Grand Cairo; with a variety of elegant curiosities which we surveyed with pleasure; yet that pleasure was somewhat abated, when we were shown some beautiful China, painted by the hand of Raphael. "What! (said Mr. Grey,) is this the best employment that could be found for the first artist of the age?" "Yes, (said I;) and the first painters in France, if not in England, are now employed in painting cups and saucers, which are brought over at an enormous expence, to gratify the exalted taste of our nobility!"

The third room on our entrance exhibited a fine display of military tools and dresses, brought chiefly from the Southern Ocean. "These," said Mr. Grey, as he surveyed them with some attention—"these are the military paraphernalia that tempt mankind to

the murder of each other ! But why do they not exhibit the *miseries* of war also ? I could wish to see a model of a field of battle, after an engagement in which thirty or forty thousand have been killed and wounded—to see the trenches filled and the plain covered with the bodies of the slain, while on every hand were exhibited the attitudes, and, if it were possible, the *cries* of torture from the wounded and the dying. Surely this might operate as an antidote to the tempting display of colours—the carved instruments of cruelty—the drum, the trumpet, and the war-whoop !”

“ Whence is it,” said I, “ that all nations, rude or civilized, take such delight in war, and pride themselves in the display of it ?”

“ St. James will tell you,” said Mr. Grey, “ that it proceeds from the *lusts* or criminal passions of mankind. Pride, ambition, a spirit of robbery, or a criminal attachment to some unworthy object, are the general causes of war : yet it will not do to avow these causes. If an island or a country is

wanted, the ingenuity of lawyers and politicians must be exerted for a colourable pretext ; and to lead the people willingly to the field of battle, they must be dressed up, like the sacrifices of old, with ribands and feathers, to make them fine."

" But you will allow," I said, " there are legitimate causes of war."—" Of *defensive* war I admit there *may* be just ground," said my friend ; " for it is not my duty to stand passive while a man should murder my wife and children : but were I a statesman, I should be as unwilling to engage in war as I am reluctant, as an individual, to go to law : and it must be some very important cause that should urge me to the latter."

" But is not trade itself founded in war? How are we to carry on commerce without colonies ? and how are colonies to be obtained but by force ? The natives will not invite us to take possession. Besides, we are bound to protect those islands, which are ours by right of discovery."

" Right of discovery !" said Mr. Grey ;

“an admirable right truly ! Captain Cooke discovered Otaheite, and does that give us a right to govern it?”—“I suppose so,” said I, “unless you think proper to add the right of conquest.”

“Aye !” said he, “that to be sure is the greatest of all rights ! So, as I walk the streets, a thief discovers my pocket book, and that makes it his by “right of *discovery* ;” but this avails little, unless he has strength and opportunity to wrest it from me, and then his claim becomes indisputable, for it is his by right of *conquest* ! !”

“I confess, sir, nothing makes a right so clear as the power to enforce it. But your comparisons are ludicrous, and throw ridicule on the affairs of statesmen and heroes, which may be of dangerous consequence.”

“Well then,” said Mr. Grey, “take a more dignified illustration : suppose an Otaheitan chief were driven out to sea, and by some strange chance were to discover this island of Great Britain, and as soon as he sat foot on shore were to stick his spear in

the sand, and proclaim his master Pomare sovereign of the country, what would you think of him?"

"I should feel more disposed to laugh, than to be angry or alarmed."

MR. GREY.—But suppose this man were followed with a mighty fleet and army, as when the Romans invaded us, and that we were weakened, like our ancestors, by intestine war, and thereby unable to resist—what then would you think of the right of conquest?

Here, feeling the weakness of my cause, and finding I was not likely to convert my friend, I turned his attention to some South Sea idols in the same room; and remarking the great difference in workmanship between these and the various implements of dress and of war formed by the same people, I enquired what he thought might be the reason that the people who bestowed so much labour on a war-club or a helmet, should take so little trouble with the images of their gods?

MR. GREY. It is only another instance of the moral insanity of mankind, (which

prevails, it seems, even to the islands of the Southern Ocean,)—they make religion the smallest of their concerns:* but in the present instance, I suspect there is another cause; their worship arises rather from fear than love; and the more ugly the idol, the better does it express the moral character of the Deity they worship, whose attributes are generally those of malevolence, hatred, and revenge.

“ You think then,” said Mr. Grey, “ that the sacrifices offered by the Heathen now, as well as of old, ‘ are unto devils, and not unto God.’ ”—“ Most assuredly: and so mad are mankind, that the more of the devil there is in the character of their gods, the greater is the number of their worshippers and the zeal displayed in serving them. This is demonstrated in the instances of Jaggernaut and Sheva, and another devil worshipped by the negroes.”

“ It seems to me,” said I, “ very strange, that men should select such objects of adora-

* This was written before their conversion to Christianity.

tion ; but there is no accounting for the follies of mankind."

MR. GREY. Yes, there is; my hypothesis of *moral insanity* accounts for them completely: their moral faculties are deranged, and "they call good evil, and evil good." So they reverse the motive for worship as well as the character of their deity; they worship from fear instead of gratitude and love, and their fears clothe the idols they worship in all imaginable terrors.

"They then make their idols ugly to correspond with the prototype in their own imaginations; and pray to them on the same principle as among us the vulgar cry for mercy, when they think they see a ghost."

We were disturbed in this chit-chat, by discovering we were left alone in the room, and by a polite intimation that our company was gone forward to the next; thither, therefore, we immediately followed.

We now came to the rooms of manuscripts which are generally passed through pretty rapidly; but as some of our company

were literary men, two or three particular objects engaged their attention.

One of our friends observed, "Here is a large collection of *Royal Letters*." "I hope they are better," replied another "than some which have been exhibited in the present reign, or I could take my 'Bible oath' that they had better have been burnt."—"They are not love letters," said Mr. Grey, "but political; and may prove important documents to future historians, who shall possess the patience requisite to their investigation."

"But here are the manuscripts of Chatterton," said Dr. Scott, "which occasioned so much controversy in the literary world." "Ill-fated youth!" replied Mr. Keen, with a sigh, "I can never think of him without sighing."

"I can sigh too," said Mr. Grey, "over the memory of this youth; but it is rather for the depravity of his character, than the severity of his fate."

MR. KEEN. He possessed talents of the first order, Sir.

MR. GREY. Unquestionably ; but he attempted to build his fame and fortune on deception and imposture.

“ What imposture did he practise, Sir ?” said I.

MR. KEEN. He forged some manuscripts, pretended to be the production of the 13th century ; and did it with such art and judgment, as deceived half the literary world.

“ And what,” said I, “ could be his object ?”

MR. GREY. To engage the attention and procure the patronage of an antiquarian, whom he supposed would admire the papers more for their antiquity than their merit ; and reward the industry of a youth, whose talents, if openly displayed, would rather excite his envy.

“ And he was deceived, then ?”

MR. GREY. He that attempts to deceive others cannot complain of being himself deceived. The great man, whose patronage he sought, had too high an opinion of himself to be interested in the fate of an obscure youth like Chatterton ; and such men, be-

fore they patronize others, calculate what fame they are likely to derive themselves thereby.

MR. KEEN. This youth did not pretend to exhibit his own talents ; but, very unaccountably, was content to sink them, and aspired to no higher honour, than that of rescuing from obscurity some musty remnants of antiquity.

DR. SCOTT. It was upon this ground, perhaps, he failed. However, we often see that Providence frowns on schemes of deception and imposition, though in cases of apparently no great importance.

MISS SCOTT. O ! Sir, there could be no great harm in that ; it was only a *white lie*, to get a little money—in fact, a livelihood.

DR. SCOTT. I hate “ white lies,” as you call them ; and can conceive they must be far more hateful to the God of truth, by their wearing the veil of innocency ; nor can any person calculate the mischiefs which arise from them.

MISS SCOTT. Then they cannot be white lies : by that term, I only mean such fibs as

can hurt nobody. Suppose, for instance, I am in *dishabille*, and order the servant to say I am not at home?

DR. SCOTT. Well, my dear, let us calculate the enormity of this pretty little "white lie," to which you are so partial. In the first place, it is a falsehood, and God has forbidden falsehood; and is it of no consequence to offend your best Friend and Benefactor?

MISS SCOTT. But, dear uncle, I cannot think God Almighty can be so angry with a fib that does no harm.

DR. SCOTT. Let us see, then, in the next place, if it really be so harmless as you suppose.—1st. You teach your servant to lie; and if there is no harm in telling a lie for you, she will not think there can be any great harm in telling one for herself; and then perhaps when you become the dupe of her lie, you may call it a black one.

MISS SCOTT. But we only mean in matters of no consequence; she must be taught to make a distinction.

DR. SCOTT. If she does, she will always

think her own lie as innocent as yours. But suppose there should be children in the family (as in most families there are) then you teach two generations to lie.

MISS SCOTT. Dear Sir ! but—

DR. SCOTT. I have not done yet, child. Suppose this servant leaves you to go into another family, and that a tradesman's family—then the white lie system goes with her; and suppose her master to be under some embarrassments, and creditors apply, then the white lie, of 'not at home,' may prove a black one; for it may, under certain circumstances, make him a bankrupt, and involve his family in ruin. Nor is this all: children will in their turn be parents, and if they have been taught the innocency of lying, they will teach it to their posterity; and thus the system may be handed down from generation to generation, and no man can calculate the evil it may produce.

MISS SCOTT. But, Sir, do you not see we are left behind?—our company are all forward.

DR. SCOTT. Then let us follow them.

MISS SCOTT. Dear Sir, what swarms of books and manuscripts! do they let any body stop to read them?

DR. SCOTT. They are national property; and persons of literary pursuits, properly recommended, are allowed to examine and extract from them.

[*Mr. Keen and the younger Miss Scott here again joined the company.*]

MR. KEEN. Here is an important antiquity, the original deed of Magna Charta; and when the enemies of our constitution ask for written documents, I would refer them to this charter.

DR. SCOTT. But I think we must refer our constitution to much higher antiquity; at least to the time of Alfred.

MR. GREY. Sir, I am disposed to carry the rights of civil and religious liberty still higher; they are the gifts of heaven. Alfred, and John, and Edward, and William III. recognized these rights, and I venerate the memorial; but they could not give them, unless they themselves had the

right of enslaving us, which I presume cannot be admitted.

MR. KEEN. By no means, Sir ; on that point we are happily agreed.

DR. SCOTT. But here is some where a charter of higher antiquity, and of more importance. O ! I see it ; it is a fine Hebrew manuscript of the Pentateuch, of great antiquity.

MR. KEEN. There, Sir, you go beyond our learning ; but here also is a copy of the Greek Septuagint, of about the 4th century.

DR. SCOTT. Yes ; and I would have the ladies notice how beautifully it is written ; for it was no doubt the work of a lady of quality of that age—the illustrious *Thecla*.

MISS SCOTT. Beautiful indeed, Sir : but I suppose the ladies of that age had more leisure than we have—they had not so much to learn.

DR. SCOTT. But it should seem they learned more : this lady was not a native Greek, but an Egyptian, who loved the

Bible, and spent in this work the time which others spent in dress and visiting.

MISS S. SCOTT. O then it was not a general case, Sir ; and she might be an old lady, I presume, like good Mrs. More.

DR. SCOTT. Mrs. More did not neglect religion till she was old, Miss ; and there is great danger that those who do so may die without it : but I mean this as a hint only.

MISS SCOTT. But, Sir, I have heard no remarks from you on the fine portraits which are scattered in these rooms.

DR. SCOTT. We can only glance at things *en passant* as we go through the rooms, and you know I generally prefer the objects which afford the best opportunity for moralizing.

MR. KEEN. We thank you, Sir ; and here is a very fine painted dome in the grand saloon we are now about to enter, which will afford you ample opportunity.

DR. SCOTT. Yes ; it is very beautiful ; and as the subject is allegorical, it may

this creature, and many others, being totally extinct?

MR. GREY. I am not sure of that: vast tracts both in Africa and America remain yet unexplored; and every country we examine presents some new specimens both of the animal and vegetable worlds: but if the species should be extinct, I see nothing inconsistent with the character of the supreme Being, who is able to form new species, and even new worlds, in an endless variety of forms.

DR. SCOTT. But do you really suppose, Sir, that any of God's creatures become extinct?

MR. GREY. I see no heresy, nor even absurdity, in the idea.

MISS SCOTT. Well then I think it well for us that the mammoth is so, for a few of them would have eaten up mankind.

DR. SCOTT. There is no creature able to cope with man, especially when united in society. The mammoth, however, was not carnivorous, but herbaceous in its food.

MISS S. SCOTT. Then I suppose it lived on trees, and would munch a forest for its breakfast.

DR. SCOTT. You are ludicrous, my dear. However, there is one circumstance I would remark, in which we may trace, as in innumerable others, the goodness of divine Providence :—The larger and more destructive creatures breed the slowest ; it is not therefore so wonderful that they should become extinct—while the most valuable animals, especially those used for food, multiply the most rapidly—as for instance sheep and kine. But I see we are again behind, and shall lose our company if we do not move forward.

We passed more rapidly through the other rooms ; but the ladies were particularly delighted with the specimens of ornithology, especially the humming birds and the hanging nests ; but as time was hastening on, the company were brief in their remarks, which I did not therefore think it necessary to preserve. When we left the rooms Dr. Scott invited us again to his

house ; but as Mr. Grey had formed another engagement on private business, and I had several letters to write into the country, we parted for the day, each to his respective business.

SIXTH DAY.

THE following day was Sunday, on which it was my constant practice to attend public worship; but being a stranger in town; it became a matter of some deliberation where we should attend; and as Mr. Grey had been my guide and companion through the week, I was unwilling to be separated from him on the Sabbath, especially as I expected to derive as much information from his conversation as from the public lectures I might hear.

The first nomination Mr. Grey politely referred to me; and as I had heard much of the chapel of a certain hospital for frail females, I proposed going thither in the morning. "With all my heart," said Mr. Grey; "it is an excellent institution, and the very

nature of it, I should hope, will ensure us an evangelical discourse, since it can be of no use to preach any doctrine, but that of grace to those unhappy beings.”—“Most assuredly,” said I; “and I should hope to find them well prepared to receive the gospel, since they can have no pretence to worthiness or merit.”

“I am not sure of that neither,” replied Mr. Grey. “They are not the best characters that have the highest idea of themselves. I have heard of a prostitute boasting that she never picked pockets; and of a pick-pocket, that she never exercised her profession on a Sunday.”

“Astonishing! It is a blessing, however, that there are such Institutions, and I wonder in this age of benevolence there are not more. I should suppose that there are thousands who would be glad to croud into them.”

“I doubt that: the love of sin increases with the practice of it,” said Mr. Grey.

“But their lives are made up of misery and wretchedness.” “Not altogether so,” said

he. " Their sin is their delight : and what with the hey-day of a gay life, and frequent intoxication, they seldom give themselves time for reflection ; nor indeed will they indulge it, till extreme misery forces it upon them."

" And then they fly for shelter."

" Yes : but as their hatred is not to the sin, but to its painful consequences, I fear they often return to their wicked courses with more readiness than they leave them."

" You are severe, Sir," said I ; " you should recollect that many of these poor creatures are seduced from worthy and perhaps pious parents, by the arts of the basest of mankind."

" These indeed are greatly to be pitied," said Mr. Grey, " and their seducers ought to be severely punished. But I conceive these pitiable objects are comparatively few. Our streets are chiefly peopled by girls who either have not been brought up to work, or are too indolent to follow it ; and yet have no other means of support. These, it is to be feared, are often the seducers ; and

their characters are too light to induce men to marry them. When these come into misery they must be glad of an asylum ; but when that misery subsides, nothing can be more terrible to them than the habits of industry in regular families—unless it be the practice of devotion in a religious institution.”

Thus we conversed upon the subject till we reached the chapel, and were soon surrounded with a very genteel congregation. The minister went through the previous service with becoming reverence ; but when he ascended the pulpit I was greatly surprised to hear his text, which was Ecclesiastes, vii. 16, 17, “ *Be not righteous overmuch,*” and so forth.

After an introduction, which contained an excellent eulogy on Solomon and his writings, he reversed the order of his text, and beginning with the second part, “ *Be not overmuch wicked,*” he proposed to consider, first, the dreadful consequences of vice, as shortening the period of human existence, and rendering it miserable while

it lasted : this observation seemed to bear upon a certain part of his audience, to whose experience he very pathetically appealed. But I could not help anticipating a difficulty in applying the other branch of his text. Surely, thought I, he will not caution the guilty part of his congregation against being overmuch righteous ; this, however, he did, and it seemed to be the principal object of his discourse. “ Our nature,” said he, “ is prone to extremes ; and having seen the evil consequences of vice, penitents are sometimes apt to give way to an austerity that injures the constitution ; or, which is more common in the present day, to a religious melancholy, which rejects the innocent pleasures of life ; and then, exaggerated notions of sin, and extreme ideas of divine justice, drive them to despair and madness.” And here he cautioned his frail auditors, lest, upon leaving that asylum they should go among the Methodists, or other enthusiasts. Moral virtue, indeed, he described as every way amiable ; and good works he extolled, as

recommending us to the favour of God, and covering a multitude of sins. He commended also a religious disposition, such as would attach them to the Established Church of England; but “by no means to run into irregularities and excesses, which in all cases are to be avoided, and especially in religion; as they tend to draw people to the conventicle, and, by deserting the church, leave them to the uncovenanted mercies of God—and consequently expose them to melancholy, which often ends in self-destruction.”

Coming out of this chapel we were suddenly greeted with the news-horn, which announced some extraordinary intelligence in the Sunday Papers—an indecency which was new and surprising to us, who, coming from the country, were not used to such violations of public decency.

As it would have been inconvenient for us to return to our inn to dinner, I had promised to introduce Mr. Grey to the house of an hospitable friend, which was conveniently situated, where we could be sure

of a hearty welcome and a comfortable dinner, without ceremony; and, according to the rules of the house, without detaining us from public worship in the afternoon.

After the usual form of introduction to my friend, Mr. BROWN, the conversation turned on where we had been, and what we had heard. I gave the company a very brief account of our sermon, which was much admired by an old lady present, and as freely censured by Mr. Grey. The good lady thought nothing more was necessary to engage people to love Virtue than to draw her in her proper form, which she thought the Clergy of the Church of England generally did; and that the Calvinists were very culpable in drawing human nature in the *sombre* colours of natural depravity.

A young gentleman present (who proved to be her nephew) agreed in her general sentiment, and confessed himself a bitter enemy to the strong humiliating expressions

adopted by the Church of England in her Prayer Book.

MR. GREY. Then I hope, Sir, you are not a member of the Established Church.

“No, indeed, Sir; I was brought up among the rational dissenters.”

MR. GREY. Then, Sir, you may be consistent; but to hear a clergyman in the desk repeat all the strong expressions of human depravity in our prayers, and then go into the pulpit and preach doctrine diametrically opposite, is an incongruity I cannot reconcile to sober reason.

The young gentleman smiled, and said he was not interested to reconcile these absurdities; but his aunt was a high-church woman, and felt herself called upon to attempt it. “As to that, Sir,” said the lady (whose name was Mrs. Good), “I think you are too critical: there are no doubt always some people in the congregation to which such expressions may be applied; but to good Christians I conceive they are only applicable in a very lax and general

sense. For my part I generally pass them over."

MR. GREY. Then I should suppose, you have but little trouble to say your prayers; for you must pass over all the Litany, and most part of the Communion service.

MRS. GOOD. No, indeed, Sir, I repeat all the responses, except a few; such as those after the 7th and 8th commandments, which I cannot say with truth; for you must admit, Sir, there is no religion in telling a falsehood."

MR. GREY. Certainly not, Madam; if you do not feel yourself "the chief of sinners," and "less than the least of all saints," as St. Paul did, you would be very wrong to say so.

MRS. GOOD. As to that, Sir, though St. Paul did say so, I apprehend he referred to his character before he was a Christian; but as I don't pretend to be so great a saint as Paul the apostle, so neither am I so great a sinner as was Saul the pharisee.

MR. GREY. And yet, Madam, with all respect, I doubt whether you could exceed him;

for he declares that, "touching the righteousness of the law," he was "blameless."

MRS. GOOD. But then, Sir, he was a persecutor.

MR. GREY. True, Madam, but even in that he acted from the best motives; for he thought he did God service, and verily believed "he *ought* to do many things against the name of Jesus of Nazareth."

Here the conversation was interrupted by the appearance of dinner, and the parties agreed to suspend hostilities for the present.

After dinner the subject was renewed, and Mr. Twigg (the rational dissenter) observed, he thought the language used by the Church of England not only degrading to human nature, but that it reflected on the divine purity, in forming such depraved and guilty creatures.

MR. GREY. If, Sir, God had formed us guilty, or had implanted moral evil in us, this reasoning would certainly be just; but the doctrine of Scripture and of the Church of England is, that "God made man up-

right," and that sin was of his own invention :—that the first man corrupted himself by transgression, which, like an evil disease, has been propagated from generation to generation through all his posterity.

MR. TWIGG. I confess, Sir, I don't understand this ; and I am not willing to receive doctrines at which my reason utterly revolts.

MR. GREY. Then I presume, Sir, your creed must lie in a very narrow compass : for there are very few truths of revelation against which our depraved reason does not revolt. What think you of the doctrines of the Trinity, the incarnation, the atonement, regeneration, a separate state, and the resurrection of the body ?

MR. TWIGG. Why, truly Sir, I believe none of them ; unless it be the last, and that in a way very different from the vulgar opinion.

" O shocking ! shocking !" cried the old lady (his aunt). " I am truly sorry, Sir, my nephew adopts such heretical notions. I

am afraid he imbibes them from the Dissenters, among whom he attends."

MR. GREY. They must be Dissenters indeed, Madam, who reject *all* the doctrines of the Gospel. But, I believe, this applies only to a very small number in comparison with the whole body. The Dissenters in general are quite as orthodox as ourselves: it is, I suppose, among the *rational* Dissenters that this gentleman attends.

MR. TWIGG. I should be glad, Sir, as you sneer at *rational* Dissenters, that you would go with me this afternoon. I can answer for your hearing a man as wise, learned, liberal, and eloquent, as ever adorned a pulpit.

MRS. GOOD. Indeed, Sir, I much wish you would; for I should like vastly to hear your opinion of this gentleman, whom my nephew so much extols.

MR. GREY. I have strong objections to hearing error and heresy:—but as it seems consistent with my design, for this day I feel half inclined.

“ Well, Sir,” said I, privately, “ I will accompany you ; and I think you will gain a point in your favour ; for this man must certainly be insane, who denies every thing.”

“ But, Mr. Twigg,” said Mr. Grey, “ if I accompany you this afternoon, to hear your favourite preacher, will you go with me in the evening to hear mine ?”

“ Certainly, Sir.”—It was now agreed, and there being no time for further debate, we set out to hear this “ most wise, learned, liberal, and eloquent of all preachers.”

On our being seated we found a very genteel congregation, and were much pleased to hear the preacher open the service with reading a chapter in the Bible. After singing Addison’s 23d Psalm, he offered a very eloquent and sublime prayer, which, I perceived by Mr. Grey’s countenance, was not altogether to his taste. They then sung again, and the preacher took for his text, John, xix. 5, “ Behold the Man.” After a slight view of the context, he said, the words were commonly supposed to be the language of the Roman

Governor, but as the name *Pilate* was inserted in italics, and not in the original, they might be better construed as the words of Jesus himself, and infallibly prove, not only that the Romans and Jews considered him only as a man, but that Jesus himself claimed no higher rank.—“He was a man,” said the preacher, “sin only excepted” perhaps,—“a man in all respects like unto ourselves.”

Having laid down this proposition as the doctrine of the text, he proceeded to prove it from the reality of his birth, (which he said was in all points like that of other men)—from the ascription to him of human passions, sensibilities and infirmities—and especially from his sufferings and death.—And here, while he enlarged with some feeling on his extreme sufferings, as a martyr for truth and virtue, at the same time he ridiculed the idea of passive, suffering Deity! He then proceeded to the improvement of his discourse in two particulars: 1. The sin and folly of idolizing a mere man whom God hath set forth, like Moses of old, for a saviour and a legislator. And

here he took occasion to observe, that the God of Israel hid the body of Moses that the Jews might not worship him; but the Christians persisted in their idolatry, notwithstanding the body of their Jesus was removed to heaven and inaccessible; and trusted their salvation to the merit of his atonement, instead of recommending themselves to the divine favour by a life of innocence and virtue. Secondly, he represented this Christian idolatry (as he called it) as the great obstacle to the fulfilment of the prophecies, in the conversion of Jews, and Turks, and Infidels, neither of whom could submit to the absurdity of worshiping a man—a man who was crucified.

Finally, he remarked, that Christians were commanded to *look* to Jesus, and “looking to Jesus” was put for believing in him—but in what character were we commanded to believe in him? As ‘an incarnate Deity,’ as the Trinitarians love to speak?—a mysterious complex being?—No: but as Jesus himself saith—“Behold the MAN!”

The service happily was short, and my friend rejoiced when it was over ; and when we came out told us, that his ears had never before been tortured with so much blasphemy. When we returned back to tea, the good old lady, who was herself confined at home by the gout, made particular enquiries of Mr. Grey respecting her nephew's favourite preacher. The old gentleman shook his head and sighed ; " Madam," said he, " I have witnessed the Son of God crucified afresh, and put to open shame."

MRS. GOOD. Bless me ! Sir, how do you mean ?

MR. GREY. Why, Madam, this learned gentleman has been proving to us, not only that Jesus Christ is a *man*, which none of us dispute, but that he is *nothing more*—' a man altogether like ourselves.'

MRS. GOOD. O shocking ! how then can he be our Saviour ?

MR. GREY. That, Madam, to *me* is a very serious question ; but I should suppose of no great consequence to you ; for what

can you want of a Saviour, who expect to be justified by your own good works ?

MRS. GOOD. Not altogether so, neither Sir. We are all imperfect creatures, and must look to our Saviour to make up our deficiencies. I am a great friend, Sir, to good works ; and a great thing it is to do our duty ; but after all, we are not perfect, you know.

MR. GREY. O Madam, I understand you ; you are for accomodating matters. Well, perhaps this gentleman may allow you *half* a Saviour ; for he says Jesus Christ was a great prophet, and a teacher sent from God.

MRS. GOOD. But I suppose he denies the atonement.

MR. GREY. Entirely so, Madam ; he considers it as one of the greatest stumbling-blocks to the conversion of the world. But this is of no great consequence to you ; your many good works will surely atone for your few failings.

MRS. GOOD. You are satirical, Sir.

MR. GREY. I hope, Madam, your com-

mendation is no satire. But to be serious ; I think that light thoughts of sin, and of our own depravity, lead to light thoughts of the Saviour. And I do not wonder, however I may lament, that those who are advocates for the dignity and purity of human nature in its present state, should sink the character of Christ also, and believe him to be altogether “ such an one as themselves.”

It was now time to think of preparing for the evening service ; and Mr. Grey, who was particularly averse to a late attendance on public worship, named the hour, and claimed the company of Mr. Twigg, who, though he was not a little chagrined at Mr. Grey’s remarks, did not choose to refuse accompanying us, especially as some young ladies in the family joined our party.

MRS. GOOD. Well, Sir, now you are going I suppose into the contrary extreme—among the Methodists :—for I perceive you lean much to their notions.

MR. GREY. Why, Madam, the term *Methodist* admits of so great a variety of meanings, that I am at a loss to understand

it. The term seems to have originated among the physicians, and afterwards was applied to a few pious students at Oxford. Some confine it to the better sort of Arminian Dissenters, and others include the Clergy, whether Arminians or Calvinists, who approve the gospel method of salvation, and act in conformity to its rules. But I dipped into a very learned pamphlet the other day, in which a great doctor derives the term *Methodism* from the Greek, and says it refers to the wiles of the devil!

MRS. GOOD. O, Sir! you must be jesting.

MR. GREY. Indeed, Madam, I thought so of the doctor, till I looked a little farther into his book, and found he was too dull to joke. However, Madam, if you wish to know the character of the gentleman we are going to hear, I assure you he is one who believes and preaches the articles he subscribed, and omits no part of the service for fear he should speak too degradingly of himself.

MRS. GOOD. Thank you, Sir, for that slap! However, Sir, I understand, though

I never heard the gentleman myself, he is one of the very zealous sort, who often turn peoples' brains ; and I have heard many stories of the kind.

MR. GREY. Very like, Madam ; many more than may be true. Some peoples' brains are so shallow that they are easily turned. But do you really think that the doctrines of the Church of England, which are what he preaches, have a tendency to turn peoples' brains ?

MRS. GOOD. O dear, Sir, by no means. But these over zealous preachers talk so much about hell and damnation, that they frighten weak people out of their wits.

MR. GREY. That also may perhaps easily be done ; and no doubt there are weak preachers as well as weak hearers : but I doubt whether any of them use, or can use, more awful language than our Lord himself did—"How can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

Mr. Grey now took leave, and conducted us to an Episcopal chapel, where a large

congregation was soon gathered ; and after the previous service of the church had been very seriously read, a venerable preacher commanded our attention.

As my friend took notes of the sermon, and has since favoured me with a copy, I shall be able to present my readers with a great part of this discourse *verbatim* ; which I do the rather, as it may sufficiently repel the charge of Mrs. Good, and the world in general, that religion has a tendency to madness.

I would only remark, that on our way we met Mr. Keen, whom we accosted ; and he, having some knowledge of the ladies who were with us, and no particular engagement, was without much difficulty persuaded to accompany us—whither he confessed he had not been for a considerable time—to Chapel.

ACTS, XXVI. 25.

I am not mad, most noble Festus ; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.

THE scene before us is full of interest. In a preceding chapter we find Paul *impleaded* before Felix by a celebrated orator named Tertullus, who, with the artifice usually attached to his profession, charges him with treason and sedition ; charges which he knew, of all others, were most likely to excite the resentment of his judge. But, armed with the breast-plate of righteousness, Paul repels the fiery darts of this wicked one, and not only convinces the Court of his innocence, but excites a desire in the Roman Governor to hear farther of the new religion which he is accused of propagating. A second hearing is appointed ; and Paul, in chains, reasons “ of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come,” until Felix trembles on the seat of judicature, and can bear to hear no more. He dismisses him,

however, courteously, and promises to send for him again at a more convenient season. But, alas ! that season never came. Those who defer the consideration of truths of infinite importance, do it at their peril. To-morrow ! dost thou say to-morrow ? “ peradventure this night thy soul may be required of thee !”

This, however, was not the case in the present instance. He had abundant opportunities to hear the word of life ; but his sordid soul, instead of enquiring after the heavenly riches, is waiting for a bribe from the friends of Paul, to set at liberty the man whom he had already pronounced innocent ; and finding him above the employment of such unworthy means to obtain his liberty, leaves him in confinement, to gratify the Jews.

A new Governor is sent from Rome ; and Festus is also desirous to hear this extraordinary case. Paul again defends himself, to the admiration of his Judge, and the confusion of his accusers. But Agrippa arrives ; and Festus, willing to

pay him a compliment, as well as to hear how the prisoner could defend himself before the Jewish Prince, appoints a hearing in presence of Agrippa and Drusilla, who were both of his own nation, and had been brought up in the same religion.

Behold Paul again called upon to plead his own cause, and that of Christianity, before his Judges, both Jews and Gentiles. We cannot follow the stream of eloquence and argument which he poured around him, but we must attend to the effect. Agrippa, with all his Jewish prejudices, is almost persuaded to become a Christian; and Festus, perfectly astounded with what he heard, and his conscience alarmed, perhaps, like that of his predecessor Felix, suddenly exclaims, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning hath made thee mad!" And never did the Apostle appear greater than in that reply, which forms my text—"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness."

As the charge is still kept alive against those who act and preach as did Paul, we

are equally interested in repelling it ; and in shewing that what Paul preached, and we also attempt to preach, contains only “ the words of truth and soberness ; ” and can therefore never warrant the accusation of its enemies, that those are beside themselves who believe and preach it. But before I enter on this subject, I beg leave to offer two preliminary remarks.

1. That the modern enemies of Christianity do not always treat us with the liberality of Festus. They charge us, indeed, with madness ; but they attribute this, not as the Roman Governor did, to excess of study, or of learning, but to causes directly opposite, and far less likely to produce such an effect—to ignorance and illiteracy.

2. We have here a specimen of the proper temper of a Christian advocate. Paul returns not railing for railing—nor does he speak evil of dignities ; but in firm, yet respectful language, repels the charge : “ I am not mad, most noble Festus ; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.”

Let us now enquire the *grounds* upon

which the degrading charge of madness is brought against Christianity, and endeavour, as we proceed, to *remove* those grounds, and refute the charge. This charge is founded I. On the peculiar principles or doctrines of Christianity; and, II. On the temper and spirit which it displays.

I. Christians are charged with madness on the ground of their principles, or for believing the doctrines of Christianity; and the points which particularly provoke this charge, are the doctrines which respect the *divine nature*—*human depravity*—the *plan of redemption*—and the *means* of personal salvation.

1. To begin with the peculiar doctrine of Christianity relative to the *divine nature*:—Paul was considered as a heretic by the Jews because he believed in the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had crucified; and by the Gentiles as a setter forth of strange gods, because “he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection.” Among the Jews he introduced no new object of worship. He preached the God

of Israel as the one true God. But he opened to them the mysteries of their own scriptures, and declared "God manifested in the flesh" in the person of Jesus, who was "seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory." The Jews, at this period, like some modern Christians (so called) had sunk their theological creed extremely low. They believed in the God of nature and providence; but they had forgotten "the sure mercies of David," arising out of his covenant-relation to his people. They looked for a Messiah, but it was under the degraded character of a temporal prince and a sanguinary conqueror. To the Gentiles, Paul, as all the primitive Christians, appeared an Atheist, because he denied and derided their idols of wood and stone; but when he preached "Jesus and the resurrection," he seemed a polytheist, for they could not comprehend how the worship of Jesus was to be reconciled to the belief of ONE God, the only object of adoration.

Another doctrine which Paul preached,

and which we also preach, is that of the atonement, or free salvation through the blood and righteousness of the Redeemer—a truth essential to Christianity, but “to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness.” Nor is this doctrine less offensive to the wisdom of the present age. To be pardoned through the sacrifice of the cross—to be saved by the righteousness of another, is not only abhorrent to the reason of deistical philosophers, but to the understanding of many who call themselves rational Christians. But to those who have tasted the bitterness of sin, who have felt the anguish of a wounded conscience, or who *know*, as Solomon expresses it, “the plague of their own hearts”—to such it is of all doctrines the most consolatory. “God forbid that I should glory,” says our apostle, “save in the cross of Christ Jesus my Lord.” It was this way of salvation by the cross, which formed the distinguishing characteristic of the primitive preaching. It was called, indeed, “the foolishness of preaching;” but what says

our Apostle? "The foolishness of God"—or that divine dispensation which men esteem foolishness, "is wiser than man." How so? Because "when the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe." Let us pause a moment, and enquire, *When* was this said? It was said in the close of the Augustan age, when Greece had been enlightened by the divine Plato, and Rome by the immortal Cicero; when the world had been charmed by the elegant numbers of Virgil, and the delicate satire of Horace—*Then* it was that the world by wisdom knew not God. But what the world "could not do," it pleased God, by "the foolishness of preaching," to accomplish. Yes: *then* God was pleased to give the fullest display of his wisdom in the scheme of redemption—a scheme that acts as a celestial atmosphere to the divine glory. Without an atmosphere we should see the heavenly bodies, each shining in his own strength; but they would shine as isolated lamps in the black vault of

heaven. So would it be in the spiritual world. The natural perfections of Deity would indeed shine with infinite glory ; but who could reconcile them to man's salvation ? It is the scripture plan of redemption which harmonizes them, and mingles all their rays in one ocean of celestial light :

—————“ Nor dares a creature guess
“ Which of the glories brightest shine,
“ The Justice or the Grace.”

A third doctrine of the gospel is that of *Divine Influences* ; a doctrine peculiarly exposed to the ridicule of worldly men. “ What ! ” said a master in Israel, “ can a man be born when he is old ; can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born ? ”

That he who made the spirit of man should have access to it in a way unknown to us, cannot be pronounced irrational : nor was it thought so by some of the wisest men among the heathen, though others covered it with reproach and ridicule. To say that *you* do not experience the influences of the Spirit is no proof that I do not ; any more than my not feeling bodily pain proves

that you feel none. A man born dark can have no correct idea of light, nor one born deaf, of sound; but both these have their peculiar feelings and experience. The one beholds the beauteous frame of nature with delight, and the other is charmed with the sweet melody of birds. The enjoyments of both are real, though neither can form a just conception of the other's happiness. Were they to converse together, each might reason against the possibility of the other's feelings, and with equal force. Now the scriptures place the doctrine of experience in religion on the same grounds: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither indeed can he, because they are spiritually discerned." They require, as it were, a new capacity to receive them: and if you can believe the thousands who were once in your state, and have had this new capacity (shall I call it?) bestowed on them, they will all tell you, (each in his own way,) that though they received the same truths, and credited the same facts, yet they know them now, not in a greater

degree only, but in a manner wholly distinct and different ; and feel an influence from them, more or less, of which formerly they had no conception. Such is the language of the New Testament, and of such as have tasted of the grace of God in every age and country.

These doctrines, it has been said, are strange to reason and foreign to all our natural notions. This is fully admitted, for they are doctrines of revelation, and those truths need no divine revelation that are con-natural to man. It must be confessed, however, that there are traces of this truth discernible in many parts of the world, which look like the vestiges of a revelation made to man in the first ages of society. The doctrine of the Trinity, misunderstood and misapplied, was probably the foundation of Polytheism ; for error is generally a perversion of the truth. And as to the atonement, have not all nations sought to propitiate the Deity by sacrifices ? and in many cases by human sacrifices ? And whence could this rite, so abhorrent to human

nature, be so likely to originate as in a tradition obscured by time, and depraved by ignorance, that the sin of man must be atoned in human nature !

But we do not build our faith upon conjecture. We believe these doctrines on the authority of God's word, and here we rest. We receive not these truths from men, nor do we want to clothe them in "the words which man's wisdom teacheth."

To the third doctrine (that of Divine Influences) it is particularly objected, that it opens the door to enthusiasm, and is liable to be abused. But this is no argument against its truth, for all practical truths are thus liable : nor are the consequences to be dreaded. That I feel the evil of sin, and derive secret consolation from the influences of the Spirit, cannot injure you ; and if I am deceived, the consequences affect myself alone. Were I indeed to pretend that the Spirit had sent me to you with some *new* revelation, and required you to submit to it, you would have a right to ask for my credentials, and require proofs

similar to those which sanctioned the first propagation of the Gospel.

But the grand objection to this doctrine lies in the subjects of it, as implying a discrimination in the Divine Being highly offensive to human pride. That *I* should feel it, and not you—Peter the fisherman, and not the Rabbi Nicodemus—here lies the difficulty. The equal rights of man are maintained at the expence of divine sovereignty! And thus vain philosophy contends; but this is not the Gospel, the very foundation of which is laid in this principle, that man has no claim upon the grace of God. The gifts which Messiah bestows are as free as the rain; and the influences of his Spirit as uncontrollable as the wind, which whispers among the leaves, or tears up the roots of the forest, as he pleases to command. In the world of nature this is admitted, and the Almighty is allowed to command the seas and the skies, but not the human heart. He is suffered to distribute his showers and his sunshine at pleasure, but not the influences of

his grace. And what does this mean; but that we have a claim upon him, and a right to say that He ought not to convert another and pass me by? But, "O man! who art thou that repliest against God?" All his dispensations have this direct tendency—to humble the creature at the feet of his Creator—to humble the sinner at the feet of his Redeemer. And no hope is there in the Gospel for the salvation of one individual, who does not cast himself down at the footstool of mercy, with a full conviction that he deserves to perish, and can be saved by grace alone.

But after all, it will be said, these things are confessedly mysterious, and are we to believe doctrines which we cannot comprehend? Most assuredly, or we must be atheists: for the being of God is the greatest of all mysteries. Conceive, if you can, a Being who never began to be—who fills all things, and is contained no where—to whom all things are present, and nothing past or future; but who comprehends all things in one view, and grasps the whole

creation in his hand. He that will not believe mysteries must believe nothing. Not only is our Maker a mysterious being—but man is a mystery to himself. “We are fearfully and wonderfully made.” Who can comprehend his soul? And as to the body, after all the discoveries of anatomy and chemistry, the first springs of the animal economy are known only to our Creator; and no man of real science pretends to understand them.

Such are the objections of ancient and modern infidelity to the distinguishing principles of the Christian faith. Some persons indeed charitably offer to remove these “stumbling blocks” out of the way; and, by resigning its essential truths, to recommend Christianity to all the world. We may commend the benevolence and liberality of those who would thus make our religion equally palatable to Jews, Mahomedans, and Pagans; but let it be remembered this can only be done by giving up the doctrine of the cross, which is no less now than formerly, and always will be, a

stumbling block to Jews, and an offence to Gentiles. You may indeed make converts, as the Jesuits in many instances have done, by assimilating Christianity to heathenism, but you assume more of heathenism yourself, than you impart of Christianity to them. You stab Christianity to the vitals, and then disembowel her; and when you have filled her breathless frame with a few rites and ceremonies, you exhibit “the form of godliness without the power.” It may do well enough for an idol to Pagans and nominal Christians—but it is Christianity no more.

II. We now come to consider a second class of objections to Christianity on which this charge of insanity is founded—namely, those derived from the genuine temper and spirit of the Gospel—and in answer to each of these I hope to prove, that we are “not mad, but speak the words of truth and soberness.”

1. It is alleged, and it is admitted, that genuine Christianity creates a distaste for the pleasures and vanities of the world,

and for the excesses to which they lead. This creates surprise and alarm. "He that departeth from evil," saith the Prophet, "is accounted mad.*"—"They think it strange," says the Apostle, "that you run not with them into the same excess of riot." Formerly you were pleasant companions, and revelled with them in every scene of debauchery and licentiousness. But, "now you take no pleasure in the scenes wherein you once gloried and delighted." Once you were fascinated with the charms of the theatre, and the amusements of the circus. You were the first to lead down the dance, and "chaunted to the sound of the harp and viol:" but these can charm no more. "Poor melancholy thing!" said a gentleman, whose lady had been converted during his absence abroad, "Poor melancholy thing! She was once the most charming of women, and the best of wives; but now she has no more taste for pleasure. The circles of fashion, the graces and the muses, have now no charms for her; and if she is

* Isaiah, lix. 15.

persuaded to accompany us, it is to oblige me, and not to gratify herself.—Her heart is evidently elsewhere.”

But follow the worldling and the Christian to their secret chambers, and hear each recount the manner in which he has spent his time. The former sighs over his departed hours, and bewails their lapse ; while the Christian recounts the pleasures of retirement, and of communion with his God. With his Bible before him, he exclaims, “ How sweet are thy words unto my taste ! yea, sweeter than honey, or the honey-comb, unto my mouth. Through thy precepts I get understanding, and therefore I hate every false way.”—Or, if he has enjoyed the solemnities of public worship, “ How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts ! A day in thy courts is better than a thousand !”

Poor melancholy worldling ! couldst thou taste these felicities, thou wouldst give thine idols and thy toys, “ to the owls and to the bats.” O when I reflect on the pleasures which attend the devotion of the heart to

God, and the enjoyment of communion with him, I feel my nature elevated to the rank of angels, and can boldly say—"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness."

2. Christianity inspires a contempt for worldly riches and secular honours; and, in certain cases, even for life itself: and those whose happiness centres in these things, infer hence that Christians must be beside themselves. What a mysterious character was Moses at the court of Egypt, when he "refused to be called the son of Pharoah's daughter; and "accounted the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt?" Nor less strange was the conduct of Saul, who is called Paul; who, when he might probably have attained a seat in the Jewish Sanhedrim; or, as being born a Roman citizen, have displayed his talents in the Forum; yet chose rather to run backward and forward through the world, at the risk of his liberty and life, to make converts to "one Jesus, who was crucified;" and not only to do

this, but to glory in it as the height of his ambition, and to pour contempt on every other object: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ!"—"Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, by which I am crucified to the world, and the world to me!"

But what are the honours of the world, that it is accounted so irrational to despise them? See Herod in gorgeous royalty upon his throne, and hear the cry of sycophant courtiers—"It is the voice of a god, and not of a man!" Ah, Herod! why art thou pale and silent in a moment? It is the secret stroke of an angel that hath smitten him. There he lies upon the bed of death. No flatterers surround him now! Guilty, loathsome, and tormented, he expires; forsaken by man, and accursed of God.

See a greater king than Herod—Belshazzar, the son of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of kings, the monarch of the world. He made a feast for a thousand of his lords; and the sacred vessels from the temple of

Jehovah shall do honour to the festal board. But what aileth thee, Belshazzar? Why drops the cup from thy lips? Why smite thy knees together? Oh! it is the hand-writing on the wall. Thy riches have made to themselves wings, and have fled away; and all thy boasted honours are gone with them—and the angel of death standeth at the door. “In that night was Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, slain.”

3. Christianity confesses a tenderness of conscience, wholly unaccountable to the world. There is no harm, say they, in a little mirth—in a little gallantry! And “so they wrap it up.” But the Christian exclaims, with Joseph, “How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God!” The young Patriarch appeared, no doubt, a perfect idiot to the licentious wife of Potiphar.

So it was argued in the heathen world. “What harm is there,” said the Proconsul, “in swearing by the life of Cæsar, or throwing a little incense upon the altar?” And so modern Casuists have taught us,

that he who goes to Rome must do as they do at Rome. But this is not the doctrine of Christianity, the spirit of which says, "Touch not ; taste not ; handle not."—"Eighty and six years," said the venerable Polycarp, "have I now served Christ, and he has never done me any wrong ; how then can I blaspheme my King and Saviour ?"

4. There are other Christian virtues which come in for their share of heathen obloquy and ridicule : meekness, long-suffering, patience, humility. These are not in the list of this world's virtues ; they mark the followers of the Lamb. "He is mad, and hath a devil," said the malicious Pharisees ;" and if they call the master Beelzebub, what must be expected by the servants ? Meekness, humility, and patience, however, are not the characters of madness.

But Christianity, it may be said, demands sacrifices too great for mortal strength ; to "cut off a right hand," and "pluck out a right eye," in the service of religion. And what if this were literally intended—would

it not be better to enter into eternal life halt or maimed, than, having two eyes and two hands, to be cast into hell fire?" The poor Hindoo devotees will sacrifice both hands and both eyes, and even life itself, to the honour of their idols, and to obtain the paradise of fools. But Christianity requires no such sacrifices. Self-denial is indeed the doctrine of the cross ; and God forbid we should attempt to remove that reproach, wherein is our true glory. But it is only when our temporal enjoyments stand in the way of our immortal interests that we are called to these painful duties ; and then, he who gave the precept has given also the promise of support and strength.

Besides, religion calls us to sacrifice no member but what is diseased or dead : and who would not part with his hand to prevent a mortification spreading up his arm ? Or who would not lose an eye to save his life. Do we not see such sacrifices daily, and call them wise and prudent ? What, then, are heaven and immortal glory worthy of no sacrifice to enjoy them ?

There was a time, indeed, in the days of martyrdom, when greater sacrifices were called for ; and women and children, animated by divine grace, ran triumphant to the stake : but what are the privations—what are the acts of self-denial required of us ? Alas ! I am ashamed to glory ! We are called upon to relinquish the pleasures of an animal, to enjoy those of an angel ; to resign the transitory riches of this world, for an exceeding great and eternal weight of glory !

5. Christianity breathes a spirit of love to God and benevolence to man, which to the world appears enthusiasm and insanity. Heathen philosophy, indeed, inculcated reverence and gratitude to God, as our Creator and Benefactor ; but to love him with “ all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength ”—to love him for the purity and perfection of his nature—and especially to love him for the display of his infinite love in the redemption of mankind—this principle is peculiar to our religion, and appears strange and incredible to the world at large.

Other religions have exhibited a love of proselytism, and the philosophers were always anxious to increase their sects ; but to seek the conversion of men for *their* sakes, and not for ours—to make converts to truth and religion, and not to our little party—this is the glory of Christianity. And it is a remarkable feature of this religion, that it regards men *as* men, and considers the souls of the poor of equal value with those of the rich. The heathen sages sought their disciples among the higher classes of society, and despised the idea of making converts among the slaves and lowest orders of mankind. Not so Christ and his apostles. The Master taught that one soul (though of a slave) was worth a world ; and the disciples counted not their lives dear in the great work of conversion. Even in modern times, we have seen men of talents, and capable of shining in the higher ranks of society—we have seen such men cross seas and deserts, and devote their whole lives to the service of negro slaves, of Hottentots, and of the meanest caste of the Hindoos. And what is their reward ? In the present life, indeed,

they have nothing to expect but reproach and ridicule—to be esteemed the wildest of enthusiasts.

But why? Should we not apportion our zeal and energy according to the importance of the objects we pursue? Do the avaricious pursue wealth with slow and tardy steps, and shall we thus seek the true riches? Do men of ambition seek fame and honour with a cold indifference? Why then should we be cold and indifferent to the honours which come from God? Talk to men of taste and science and virtû, as it is called, to be calm and torpid in their admiration of the beautiful, the elegant, and the sublime; but talk not to the Christian of such feelings in the admiration of infinite excellence—in the pursuit of immortal happiness—in the contemplation of eternal glory.

What then? is it the mark of a sound mind to spend all its energies on trifles, and to treat eternity with indifference? O ye sons of men, “Wherefore do ye spend your money for that which is not bread, and your

labour for that which satisfieth not?" Why spend all your exertions on the vanities of this temporal life, and reserve none for the future immortal interests of the soul? O worse than madness! worse than idolatry! thus to prefer earth to heaven—a moment to eternity!

6. Christianity elevates the mind to heaven, and affords anticipations of future blessedness. Such was the language of our Apostle: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have an house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:—desiring rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

Mankind, in general, flatter themselves with the hope of heaven as a state of rest from pain and trouble; but, alas! they consider not, that without the change which they so loudly deprecate, even heaven would afford no blessedness to them. There they rest, it is true, from their labours and their

sufferings ; but they rest not from their beloved exercise—for “ they cease not, day nor night, saying, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty.”

Think, Christian, what would be your misery, were you condemned to hear for ever the song of the drunkard, and were the names of Bacchus and Venus to be eternally ringing in your ears : and, O ye children of Vice and Infidelity, no less terrible would it be to you, to hear for ever the praises of a holy and a righteous God, and the honours of the bleeding Lamb. You know not your own hearts ; but could you hear this in the present state of your minds, you would curse the name of Jesus, and “ blaspheme the God of heaven,” while you “ gnawed your tongues with pain.”

But the Christian anticipates with pleasure both the state and the employment of the blessed. He hears from afar the shout of, “ Worthy is the Lamb !” and he longs for that day when he shall join the universal chorus, with every creature that surrounds the throne.

Nor is the society of heaven less the subject of his longing anticipations. He is "come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven; and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant."

Thus exults the Christian! But these heavenly frames—these joyful anticipations—are the ground of his accusation. The man is in a delirium, and raves of God, and of angels, and of heaven! Poor man, religion has made him mad.

Is it needful to repel this charge? Must I justify the traveller in longing to be at home?—the exile for wishing to return to his family and friends?—the soldier in anticipating victory and glory? O my hearers! must I not retort the charge? You fly from "the chamber where the good man meets his fate," as if it were the dungeon of a maniac; but follow him to the invisible

world—follow him to the bar of God, and take heed lest you be found the madman, and he the sane. Hark ! the Judge has pronounced the sentence which

“ Assigns the sever’d throngs distinct abodes.”

“ Then shall the righteous man stand with great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his labours. When they see it they shall be troubled with terrible fears, and shall be amazed at the strangeness of his salvation, so far beyond all that they looked for. And they, repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit, shall say within themselves, “ This was he whom we had sometimes in derision, and a proverb of reproach : we *fools* accounted his life MADNESS, and his end to be without honour. How is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints ! ” That your lot and mine may also be among them, may God of his infinite mercy grant, for our Redeemer’s sake. Amen.

END OF THE SERMON.

IF what Bishop *Burnett* says be true, that “*that* sermon has had a true effect which sends away an audience thoughtful and anxious to be alone”—this sermon was not in vain. As we came out we took leave of our friends, and hastened to our chambers:—even Mr. Keen, as we were afterwards informed, received another temporary check to his vivacity and loquaciousness; and instead of going to spend his evening at the tavern, went home, and early retired to his room. His servants thought him unwell; but as he appeared averse to speaking, did not enquire particulars. He would indeed gladly have read the chapter from which the text had been selected, but he had no bible; and he had so often made a ridicule of that book, that he was ashamed to enquire for one among his servants. He therefore hastily retired to his chamber, but not to *rest*; for the little sleep he gained

was broken and disturbed with the apprehension that he was himself the fool and the madman, that he had supposed others.

Suffice it at present to say, that the next morning he waited on his old friend Dr. Scott, and after much hesitation and embarrassment, confessed he felt something with respect to religion that he had never felt before. As we have given Dr. Scott the character of an excellent and judicious Christian, we leave Mr. Keen at present to his counsels, and pursue our narrative.

Next morning Mr. Grey informed me that he was about to leave town, and began to enquire if I was now satisfied of the truth of his position, that mankind were indeed beside themselves, and the world insane. To this I frankly replied, that I was, and was ready to confess it. Then said my instructor, "I have invited a few friends together this evening to take leave, and expect that you will relate to them the history of our adventures, and the result of

your convictions." I intreated my friend to indulge my natural taciturnity, and take upon himself that office, while I promised to confess my conviction, in answer to any questions he might think proper to propose. This point settled, Mr. Grey and I separated, to transact our own private business till the evening. We shall therefore adjourn to our concluding scene.

SEVENTH DAY.

MONDAY evening came, which was intended for the parting interview, and our friends assembled to the number of eight, including Dr. Scott, and his young friend, Mr. Keen, who (as before observed) was now almost persuaded to become a Christian, and has since assumed and justified the character. There were also four or five gentlemen who had been present on the preceding Monday, when the challenge of Mr. Grey was given.

That evening was now adverted to, and one and another enquired, if the experiments of the preceding week had satisfied me that the world was as insane as it had been represented. I replied, that I was

indeed fully satisfied ; but not being qualified to give that detail of evidence and reasoning which some of the company might expect, I begged leave to refer to my friend and conductor, Mr. Grey, who being now on all sides called upon, began as follows :

“Gentlemen, the first evening I had the pleasure to spend in your company, I excited your surprise and no doubt incurred your censure, by asserting that “all mankind are mad”—ALL, I mean, except those who have been recovered by means which I shall hereafter explain. On this subject I might have referred to authority, and quoted philosophers and fathers ; but I chose rather to appeal to facts, and have, as you have heard, fully satisfied the gentleman who accepted my challenge, and has accompanied me for this week past, that mankind are really as insane as I had represented them. To prevent mistakes, however, before I proceed farther, I beg leave to repeat what I then premised, that I do not mean to say mankind in general are so

insane that they cannot conduct the common business of human life; nor that they cannot overreach, defraud, and even destroy one another. Their mania is of a moral nature, and these very instances will be brought in proof of my position.

Neither do I consider their madness as of such a nature as to furnish an excuse for their conduct: alas! no; this madness is their sin; and their crime is, that with all the abilities of doing right, they are perpetually doing wrong.

It is not easy to define *Insanity*. Neither metaphysicians, nor medical men, are agreed in any established definition of Madness. To me it appears that it is often not so much a deficiency in the powers of reasoning, as a false conception of the objects on which such persons reason. A man who supposes his limbs to be made of glass or china, is perfectly consistent in the most scrupulous care respecting them. Another who thinks he hears a voice from heaven, enjoining some criminal or absurd action, is deceived by that foreign impulse, and not

by his own conclusions. So a third, who may be afflicted with melancholy or despair, forms a false conception of his situation, on which that despair is founded.

Something analogous to this obtains in moral madness.—Men form wrong conceptions of themselves, and a false estimate of the surrounding objects. They listen to the delusions of our spiritual enemies, and act under the influence of corrupt and depraved passions. They dream of evils which exist only in their own imagination, and are insensible to the real dangers which threaten them. But to make myself more easily and fully understood, I shall apply these observations to the various classes of mankind, and illustrate their truth by reference to the facts and circumstances which my friend and I have had the opportunity of observing in the preceding week; and in order to methodize my observations I shall divide the world into several classes:—The busy, the gay, the political, the literary, and the religious world.

1. The BUSY world comprises several subdivisions of mankind—the husbandman—

the manufacturer—the tradesman, and the merchant.

Of all professions that of husbandry is the most important: “the king himself is served by the field;” and the husbandman is the benefactor of his country. No man can exceed him in the wisdom and industry discovered in his profession. He is an observer of times and seasons, and a great part of his skill lies in the *timing* of his work, and the adjusting of his crops to the most proper soils. And yet on the most important of all subjects how great is frequently his infatuation! He knows that “men do not gather figs of thorns, nor grapes of thistles;” that cockle seed will not produce barley, nor tares wheat; but that “what a man soweth that shall he also reap;” yet they “sow to the flesh, and expect to reap eternal life.” They know that in the present life they are tenants at will only, and liable to be ejected by Death without a minute’s warning; yet are they laying farm to farm, and field to field; pulling down their barns that they may build

greater; and cheering themselves in this language, "Soul, take thine ease, thou hast goods laid up for many years;" until at last this voice is heard suddenly from heaven—"Thou fool! thou madman! this night is thy soul required of thee!"

Much commendation is due to the ingenuity of our manufacturers, and upon the whole to their industry: and it is greatly to be regretted that they should ever be oppressed. But I am sorry to say their character is not uniform: too many give way to indolence and intemperance, and impose on themselves heavier taxes than are levied by any government upon earth. The man who plays one day in a week (say St. Monday) pays an income tax of 16 per cent. or one-sixth of his whole earnings; he that plays two days, pays above thirty per cent; and one that plays three days, as many do, pays 50 per cent. or full half his income. Besides all this he pays a tax to the publican, for he requires more beer at play than at work; and a tax to the pawnbroker, which certainly is not a light one. Thus

he ruins his character and his constitution ; clothes himself with rags, and starves his family or drives them to the workhouse. Yet these men are the loudest in complaining of the times and of the taxes ; are they not therefore evidently insane ?

There are, however, many among the working classes who are neither idle nor extravagant. They labour six days in the week, perhaps seven, for “ the meat which perisheth ;” but seek not that which “ endureth to everlasting life.” They spend all their strength and time in providing for their bodies and their families, but never think of providing for another world ; and yet if you talk with these people they will all acknowledge that they are mortal, and generally confess their belief in a future and eternal state. Are not these men mad ?

Ascending higher, we find the same charge unhappily applies to the great body of our tradesmen and merchants. No men living are more anxious than they are to obtain wealth, of which they cannot insure possession for a moment ; and even in the

last stage of life we have seen the Jew and the Quaker merchant trying to outwit each other, as they were passing into eternity. We see instances, almost daily, of persons cut off from their riches, or of those riches making to them "wings to fly away;" and yet we take no care to make friends of this "mammon of unrighteousness," as our Lord advises, by employing it in doing good.

Many pride themselves upon their skill and accuracy in calculation, particularly in the value of lives and leases; and yet they set little or no value upon everlasting life, and take less pains to procure it, than they would to obtain a seven years' lease of any valuable earthly premises. They must see, by events continually before their eyes, that Death, not unfrequently, gives no warning; and when he does, a sick bed seldom affords the opportunity of preparation: that acute disease prevents calm reflection, and fevers are frequently attended with delirium; and even when patients are perfectly capable of reflection, their friends often deceive them

as to the state of their disorder, or medical men lull them with opium to insensibility.

Now let us lay these circumstances together. To sow one crop, and expect to reap another essentially different—to complain of taxes, and far more heavily to tax ourselves—to build all our happiness on the uncertain tenure of a moment, and to prefer the trifles of time to the riches of eternity—in fine, to defer the most important business in the world, to the most uncertain, the most improper time—these are instances of insanity far more decisive than blanket robes and straw sceptres, and all the usual paraphernalia of derangement. So much for the busy world. What shall we say to,

2d, The GAY and fashionable world? Our Lord directs us to “work while it is day;” but these people, as if they took pleasure in contradicting all the ordinances of heaven, invert the order of nature; and are never so happy as when the shortness of the day almost excludes them from the light of heaven.

No people upon earth express more deli-

cacy in respect of health, and yet none are more inventive in the arts of destroying it. They know that air and exercise are the great preservatives of the constitution, and yet they seldom move but in warm and soft carriages, admirably calculated to breed the gout; and if at any time they venture into the air for their amusement, it is generally the chill air of evening, empoisoned with the smoke of artificial illuminations—to say nothing of the corrupt and pestilential vapours of the ball-room or the play-house.

But these are only minor instances of their insanity: in the most important concerns they are most irrational. The industrious mechanic, and the assiduous tradesman, plead the want of time to meditate on their spiritual concerns; but these people have so much time upon their hands, that all their ingenuity is employed kill it, as they generally express themselves. For this purpose they sleep more than half their lives; and when they have arisen, which is seldom before the sun has passed his zenith, they accustom themselves to dress, (if it

may be called dress, when its perfection, as respects the more delicate sex, seems to lie in its approach to nudity;—they accustom themselves to dress) several times in the day, in order to fill up their time. When night comes, they sit down to eat and to drink, frequently to excess, which becomes the more dangerous, from their having so little exercise; and afterwards they attempt to amuse themselves with cards, fancifully spotted—a diversion invented for the relief of a royal maniac, and certainly very well adapted for the purpose. Or else they hire buffoons, fiddlers, and posture masters, to make them merry, (poor things!) when they are the greatest objects of pity, and compassion in the world.

Again, these people, ignorant as they are (and often they are extremely ignorant, even of the present world,) must know that they are born to die, and that death cannot be avoided. Yet, notwithstanding they have so much time upon their hands, and are so much troubled to get rid of it, they never think of preparing for the event; but the

sight of death, or a sick bed, strikes them with so much terror, that they fly the house, and seldom stop to perform the last offices of humanity for their nearest relatives. And when the fatal event has taken place, instead of showing their love and respect by attending the remains of their kindred to the tomb, they leave this to servants and domestics. O happy they ! could they as easily avoid the king of terrors, when he is sent to execute his warrant on themselves.

Many years since a nobleman of the above description died, and the domestics consoled themselves that their master was certainly gone to heaven ; but his *fool* (for then the wisest men were called fools, as they are now considered madmen ;—his fool) said “ No ! he was certain his master was not gone so far ; for he had made no preparation, and he was always used to make great preparations when he had to go a journey.” Upon this principle we may well conclude, these people do not mean to go to heaven ; for they not only never make preparations for such a journey, but they

actually pursue the contrary road ; and hell itself would scarcely be more terrible to their imagination, than that state of perfect purity, and perpetual devotion, which constitutes the Christian heaven.

But to see these people in their true colours, we must view them in their convivial moments, when they have thrown off restraint, and converse freely. Then they imprecate upon themselves, and each other, every possible mischief in this world, and eternal damnation in the next—until at length they attain the height of their felicity, and fall dead drunk upon the floor ; exhibiting a scene of noise, confusion, and blasphemy, which has no parallel in Bedlam or St. Luke's. Surely I need not put the question—Are not these people also morally insane ?

3. Little need be said to prove the madness of the POLITICAL world, which has long been generally admitted ; and indeed it seems otherwise impossible to account for the many strange events of the present age. The caprice of tyrants, the intrigues of

statesmen, and the rage of conquerors, are evidences full in point. In the latter the fact is fully admitted, from "the Grecian madman to the Swede," and from the Swedish madman to the Corsican. But for political madness we need go no farther than a general election, where we often find independent gentlemen spending half their patrimony, to obtain the unbiassed suffrage of the electors, in order to procure a seat in a certain house, where they will seldom sit, or sit for very little purpose : and what is still more strange, men of benevolent principles, and moral habits, will sometimes intoxicate a whole town, and throw it into a state of riot and confusion, for the public good, which, to be sure, in their proper senses they would never do : a specimen of this we saw the other day in passing through Covent Garden, where liberty was honoured by the violation of every principle of justice and good order. As to political skill, how little of that goes to constitute a modern politician, we saw, said Mr. Grey, looking toward me, in the instance of the militia

captain who undertook to direct the navy, and in the naval lieutenant who criticized the operations of the army—at the City Coffee-house.

4. The LITERARY world has often betrayed strong symptoms of insanity: witness Lauderdale's Attack on Milton—Rowley's Poems—and the Shaksperian Manuscripts. But this is a point which need not be laboured: the first literary authority has decided it:

“Great wits to madness nearly are allied:

“How thin partitions do their bounds divide!”

Some literary men, however, have not the madness of genius; but a much worse insanity. How often have literary men devoted their talents to the cause of vice, and sold themselves to work iniquity! And when their studies have not been criminal, how generally have they been trifling in the extreme! A doubtful reading, or an obscure phrase in Homer or in Virgil, has occupied a host of critics, while the book of truth

and life has not been opened. Men in the last stage of disease have amused themselves with the drama; or, while under sentence of death have written notes on Shakespear. Alas ! do not these learned men know that they have souls ; or have they voted, like their brethren at Paris, that Death is an eternal sleep ?

Generally speaking, literature and science are as much articles of trade as any other ; and the first talents in the country are brought to market, as we saw at the Literary Coffee-house, where an author and a bookseller abused each other like the lawyer and apothecary in the city.

Sometimes, indeed, talents are contracted for by the prime minister, or the leader of opposition, to support a party ; and at others, they are disposed of to defend some debauched patron, or to afford loose or profane amusement at some theatre of dissipation. Seldom, alas ! are talents considered as a depositum which must be accounted for another day, and in another world.

5. We come, lastly, to the RELIGIOUS world. And who are the insane persons here?

Are not those insane whose religion consists merely in external ceremonies, and who think to please a God of infinite purity and wisdom by counting beads and saying prayers, when they do not even wish to receive the things they ask for, except it be temporal prosperity? and this they never look for from above. What should we say to a beggar who came to ask an alms, if he were to look twenty different ways, and count his buttons all the while? Surely the most charitable idea we could form of this man would be, that he is a maniac.

And what shall we say of those who put on the mask of hypocrisy merely to serve their worldly interests? Do they think they can impose upon their Maker? If so, they must be ideots. If not, they must be maniacs, thus to play the fool in matters of infinite concern. The world in general would like them better without the semblance of religion; and we all know that

God detests no character so much as he does that of a hypocrite.

Those who place their whole religion in *speculation* only, without Christian practice or experience, show evident traces of the same malady. Some place all their religion in hearing sermons, and in talking about preachers ; but were I to show you a creature with nothing human but its ears or tongue, would you call that a man ? As little does hearing, or talking, constitute a Christian. Wherefore are we endued with understanding ? The only reward we can expect for knowing our Master's will, if we do it not, is to be beaten with many stripes instead of few. Such unhappy persons appear to be like certain other maniacs, under a kind of moonshine inspiration, which indeed affects the head, but does not warm the heart.

A third class of religious maniacs are the merit-mongers, who, by their good works and kind intentions, wish to purchase apartments in the celestial mansions. Were an unhappy Bedlamite to offer a few straws for

a purse of gold, you would pity his disordered intellect; yet there is some proportion, though but a remote one, between the intrinsic value of straw and of gold; but what proportion can there be in the value of moral and religious duties, (full of imperfection at the best,) and that "exceeding great and eternal weight of glory," which is the promised reward of Christians?

But if it be absurd to expect heaven for our good deeds, what shall we say to those who expect to obtain it for their bad ones? I am not now speaking of those heroes and conquerors, whose fame is built on the destruction of half their species; nor of those religious zealots, who think they deserve well of their Maker, for murdering his meek and humble followers. No: I refer rather to those who squeeze and oppress their poor labourers and dependants—first to raise an estate for themselves and children, and then to make an offering to the Most High—it may be to endow an alms-house, or to build a chapel. If the hire of an harlot was an

abomination to the Lord, and his soul detested robbery for a burnt-offering—with what language will the great God resent the charity and benevolence of rich oppressors of the poor? “Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for the miseries which shall come upon you!”

But in exposing the criminality of these persons, I had almost forgotten their absurdity. Such must either suppose their motives and conduct to be a secret from the Most High, or that he is altogether as indifferent to equity and justice as themselves. They are either morally insane, or literally ideots.

But what carries this farce to the acmé of absurdity is, that these people generally reserve their charity till it can be called their's no longer—I mean when they come to die. Then, perhaps to be revenged of a relation who has offended them—or, because they have no relations, and have so conducted themselves in the world as to have procured no friends—for some or all of these reasons they divide their substance to

this religious society, and the other benevolent institution—in hopes, peradventure, to merit that heaven in which their unsanctified nature must be miserable, if they could be admitted. Unhappy maniacs !

Another class of religionists rest their hopes of future happiness on the portion of misery they sustain in this. They argue, surely God will not suffer his creatures to be miserable in both worlds ; but if vice and misery are companions, as we often find them, then the most vicious characters have the strongest claim on future happiness. Others, fearing their afflictions might not be sufficient to insure their happiness, become self-tormentors, and think to recommend themselves to heaven, by making themselves as miserable as possible on earth. Thus, the poor heathen Hindoos practice swinging and other tortures, of whose moral insanity I suppose no question will be made ; and those who flatter themselves that the Almighty will be pleased with their mortifications and fastings, without moral purity and integrity, differ only from the former,

by thinking to purchase heaven upon more easy terms; and are therefore more, instead of less insane.

Moral insanity, however, puts on so many forms, and is attended with so great a variety of symptoms, that it is in vain for me to attempt to trace them all. As it respects the religious world, I consider all those to be insane, who expect to be saved in any other way than what God has appointed in his word. This I have no wish to narrow, by confining it to any of the little sects or parties into which good Christians are unhappily divided; nor dare I attempt to widen it to embrace the vicious or unbelieving—the merit-monger or the hypocrite. All are morally insane; and if they attain to heaven or happiness, it must be by the skill and kindness of the great Physician of souls, who can alone effect their cure.

Having now traced this moral disease through a variety of cases and symptoms, it may be expected that I should moralize a little upon the cause.

Some have been of opinion, that lunacy,

in all its forms, is the result of demoniacal possession. So thought that ingenious philosopher Andrew Baxter,* and many others. They argue that, though a defect in the material organs might account sufficiently for a defect of intellect, and produce ideotcy, it could never account for that surprising quickness and energy of mind, which insane persons often display. They plead also the authority of the New Testament, which applies to demoniacs all the symptoms of lunacy. And without entering into the general subject of dæmonology, as it respects this moral mania I confess there are strong circumstances in favour of the hypothesis.

One reason for suspecting these persons of being under diabolical influence is, that their language often is infernal. They delight to talk of hell, the devil, and damnation. *Devilish* is a favourite epithet on all occasions. Their wine is *devilish* good, but it is *devilish* dear, or they have *devilish* bad

* Essay on the Soul, 3 vols. 8vo.

accommodations. I need not go farther in this fashionable nomenclature. Those who have the misfortune to live among such people will recollect a variety of these infernal adjectives, which apply equally to every object, good or bad ; and if their own confession be of any weight, they will tell you frankly that *the devil is in them*.

A farther proof of their being under infernal influence might be deduced from their love of darkness, and their delight in cruelty, revenge, and blood. Surely we may well say of them, as was said of a more sober kind of people, "Ye are of your father the devil, and his works ye do." But the Scriptures are in many places express to this point: "The god of this world hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not—they are led captive by Satan at his will."

In the history of this disease, should we be required to trace its origin, we must refer back to that

"Forbidden fruit, which brought
"Death into the world, and all our woe."

There can be no doubt but that fruit which was forbidden by our benevolent Creator, who gave to our first parents, this only excepted, "all things richly to enjoy," contained a mortal poison, and was of a highly deleterious and intoxicating quality: hence it so immediately deranged their understanding, that they attempted to hide themselves from the eyes of Omniscience among the trees of the garden. Every age since has afforded a thousand similar instances; but the highest possible demonstration of the moral madness of mankind is, that when the supreme Being sent his own Son into the world to save them, they crucified him. Thus, indeed, they accomplished the end they would willingly have defeated; and it does not appear that, in the hour of our redemption, there was a single human being that understood the plan—much less that concurred in the design. His enemies thought they had frustrated his designs, and his own disciples were alarmed and distressed with the same idea.

My design is not, however, to aggravate human misery. You may suspect that I wish to represent the state of mankind as desperate and hopeless ; and you may be ready to take up the lamentation of the prophet, and to say—"Is there no balm in Gilead ? Is there no physician there ?" Blessed be God, there is ; and if you will permit me to recommend him to you—there is ONE PHYSICIAN, and one *only*, who can perform the cure. This good Physician has cured thousands, and continues to cure all who apply to him ; and, what may be thought extraordinary, he not only prescribes gratis, but administers his remedies "without money, and without price."

As nothing, however, gives so great encouragement to patients as the report of others who have been in the same situation, and met with relief or cure, I shall present you with a few cases of indubitable authority, which will, I hope, induce you to apply to this good Physician of souls.

ZACCHEUS, the Jew, for the sake of gain, accepted the office of tax-gatherer to the

Romans, and made his office the more odious to his countrymen, by the oppressive manner in which he executed it. Indeed he was mad after riches; and though he professed a religion which enjoined the most perfect equity, he paid no regard to any of its precepts which stood in the way of his amassing wealth. One day, however, he heard that this good Physician was about to pass at no great distance from his residence, and felt a great desire to see him. For this end, being short of stature, and unable to look over the shoulders of the crowd, he climbed a tree which stood by the way side; but how was he surprised, when he heard this good Physician say, as he passed by him, "Zaccheus, come down; for I must dine at thine house to-day!" Down he came; his covetous heart was instantly enlarged; and he ran home to prepare a liberal entertainment for his unexpected guests. On this occasion he made a full confession of his covetousness, and spontaneously promised the restitution by

the law of God prescribed to all whom he had injured.

MARY MAGDALENE's was a most distressing case. We read that she was possessed by seven demons ; but in what manner they afflicted her is not said. If, however, we may judge of her sufferings by the gratitude she manifested when she obtained a cure, they must have been great indeed ; for she sat at the Master's feet, and bathed them with her tears.

A PRODIGAL young gentleman, mentioned by Luke the physician, was mad enough to leave his father's house, and spend all his property in riot and debauchery, till he was reduced to that extreme misery that he coveted the husks on which the swine were fed ; but under the care of this Physician he " came to himself," repented of his folly, and returned with tears and penitence to his father's house, where he met with the most kind reception.

SAUL of Tarsus, a man of distinguished talents and a learned education, was so

exceedingly mad with the spirit of party, that he pursued the Christians of his time to prison and to death : but, lo ! in the height of his frenzy, as he was travelling to Damascus, he met this good Physician, who calmed him with a word, and instantly changed his heart ; so that he immediately joined the people he had so bitterly hated, and from their persecutor became their preacher.

If it be enquired whether in these cases there were no relapses, I must confess there have been some melancholy ones, but none beyond the skill of the good Physician to recover.

David, the king of Israel, inflated with prosperity, and forgetting to whom he was indebted for it, relapsed in a very awful degree ; and being persuaded by the sycophants around his throne, as is too often the case, that he had a right to do as he pleased with his subjects, acted in a manner which greatly disgraced his character, and involved him in deep distress of mind : he was recovered, however, to his right mind,

through the instrumentality of the prophet Nathan.

PETER, the fisherman, so far forgot himself, even in the presence of his Physician, as to deny, with oaths and curses, that he had ever known him ; but suddenly the latter cast on him such a glance of pity and compassion, as instantly recovered him ; on which he went out—wept bitterly—and relapsed no more.

But these instances, it may be said, occurred a long time ago ; and are there no recent ones ? No cures to which reference may be made within recollection, and in the present age ? Certainly innumerable ones ; and I will mention a few within my own knowledge, of which I can answer for the facts, though it may not be delicate to disclose the names.

BRAVO was a hero of most desperate character, and as truly mad as was the Macedonian or the Swede. His high spirit and sense of honour (as he called it) involved him in perpetual squabbles ; and he seems never to have been so happy as when fight-

ing—either with his friends or enemies. One day, while he was swearing outrageously in the field of battle, a bullet entered his mouth, and passed through his cheek—but he was mad enough to despise this, and every other warning of his mortality, until one day he had a very unexpected interview with this good Physician, who so completely calmed him, that he raged no more, and was ever afterwards very strongly attached to the Author of his cure.

LOTHARIO revelled in debauchery among the higher ranks of society, where his wicked wit always made his company desired. Knowing the absolute inconsistency of such a life with the profession of Christianity, he renounced it, and fortified his mind against its threatenings by the arguments of infidelity, and ridicule was his coat of mail. But he fell dangerously sick, and his principles failed him when support was most required. He had now recourse to that Bible which had been his

“Jest-book, whence he drew

“His shafts to gall the Christian and the Jew.”

He read it now with different eyes and another heart. It directed him to the good Physician; and though his body fell a victim to his early vices, his mind received a perfect cure.

Never was man more criminally insane than PECCATOR. He seemed to love vice for its ugliness; and so fond was he of profaneness, that he exerted all his genius (which was not inconsiderable) in the invention of new and strange oaths, so that he became proverbially wicked, and was considered as possessed of the devil; but this good Physician perfectly dispossessed him; and he spent the remainder of his days in going about to recommend him to others. He also wrote a book, giving an account of his cure, and inviting others to apply to his beloved Physician.

ASPASIA was a lady of quality, and so mad after pleasure, that she made herself miserable in its pursuit. Though she had a carriage at command, she was daily as much fatigued as a woman who goes out to work, but without the advantages of air

and exercise. In the day-time she fatigued herself in dressing to receive company, or to pay visits ; and in the evening often risked her life by her carriage being jammed in between other carriages, and was sometimes thrown into hysterics by the quarrels of Irish chairmen and drunken coachmen. Thus she pursued a round of misery, under the name of pleasure, and was perpetually disgusted with her amusements and enjoyments, until one Sunday a benevolent lady persuaded her to accompany her to a church, where the good Physician was the chief topic of discourse. Finding no relief from any other quarter, she determined to try his skill, and immediately on application received a cure. She began now to consider how the remnant of a life almost worn out with pleasure might be turned to some good account, both to herself and others. She had done with routs, and operas, and balls ; and devoted all her future time to doing good, and to preparing for an eternal world. Still she visited ; but it was the sick and the afflicted ; and her favourite

amusement was, Dorcas like, to make garments for the poor.

The learned HORATIO was a different character from any of the preceding. From his youth up his character was moral and irreproachable; and upon that he unhappily founded his hopes of happiness and heaven. He was not sensible of the depravity of his nature, nor of the imperfect character of his religious duties. He had high notions of his moral rectitude, and was a believer in human merit. In short, "he was whole," in his own opinion, and needed no physician. But in reading the Scriptures, to which he had been accustomed occasionally, rather to admire their literary beauties, and to understand them critically, than with any practical view, he was struck with several circumstances that had not hitherto excited his attention.

He was surprised to find the New Testament writers seemed to take a pleasure (as it now appeared to him) in degrading human nature; and he was startled to find the heart of man described by the Hebrew pro-

phet as "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked"—and by our Lord himself as the fountain of iniquity, from which "proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries," and every other crime. And when he came to examine the moral portraits of the Greeks and Romans, drawn by the Apostle Paul, he was perfectly confounded, since he had been accustomed to consider them as models of the heroic virtues.

He had been accustomed to reverence the Son of God as a great and exalted character; but he had never considered him as partaking of the same divine nature with the Father, and entitled to equal honours. Indeed he had thought many divines blameable, in confounding (as he expressed it) Jesus Christ with the Deity who sent him; but when he came to read the bold and unguarded manner in which the Apostles speak of him, as "the great God and our Saviour;" and the manner in which they ascribe to him the glory both of creation and redemption, he began to suspect that he must have been in an error, as their views

appeared to differ materially from his. Further, he could not comprehend what they meant by the work and office of the Spirit of God. He had supposed that reason and study, with a candid disposition, were equal to any subject on which the human mind could be employed; he knew not therefore what St. Paul could mean in saying, the natural man cannot comprehend the things of the Spirit of God; nor had he any dependance on supernatural assistance.

But what more than all stumbled him was, that the great Apostle decidedly renounced all reliance on his own wisdom and righteousness, placing all his confidence on the Redeemer, and speaking of him always in those terms of reverent affection and attachment—of love and adoration—which his system had never hitherto admitted.

These things greatly astonished him—made him more indefatigable in reading the Scriptures, and led him to add fervent prayer for that divine illumination which

he now began to consider necessary. He perceived also a divine unction in the sacred writings, to which he had been hitherto a stranger—he was cured of the notions of human merit, and of self-dependance, and placed all his future hopes and confidence in the good Physician.

It would be easy to enlarge the number of cases, and of cures; but it would be useless. Nothing now remains but the application; and you, gentlemen, will, I hope, save me this most difficult part of my discourse. I have heard of a lady who, in reading a certain popular work on medicine, always felt, or imagined she felt, all the symptoms which the author had described. Should any of my respected auditors this evening be sensible that their case has been described, my hope is, that they will apply to the GOOD PHYSICIAN which I have recommended.

The Author wishes to leave this Address with its full weight upon the Reader's mind,

and not to weaken it by any of his own remarks. If any one wish to know what effect it had on the mind of Mr. Grey's immediate auditory, suffice it to say, that, like other sermons, it received but a partial attention. Some listened with apparent pleasure, particularly Mr. Keen, whose character, as above remarked, was now materially altered, and it is hoped he will prove a serious Christian. Others determined to persevere in banishing all serious thoughts as long as possible. Perhaps, however, when these persons shall be confined to the chamber of affliction—when they are visited with cutting bereavements, or painful disappointments—perhaps in the day of adversity they may consider—or perhaps Death may call them suddenly into an eternal world, without the opportunity of a moment's recollection, and they may bitterly repent when it is too late—FOR EVER.

THE END.

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